Daily Report

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Inter-Arab Affairs

'Sources' Predict Arab Summit on Lebanon in Feb

LD1701151390 Kuwait KUNA in English 1430 GMT 17 Jan 90

[Text] Beirut, Jan 17 (KUNA)—Arab diplomatic sources predicted in a statement to KUNA here Wednesday that an extraordinary Arab summit on Lebanon would be held in the first half of February.

The sources, speaking to KUNA on a telephone conversation between Arab envoy to Lebanon Lakhdar Ibrahimi and Lebanese Premier Dr. Salim al-Huss earlier today, said that the tripartite Arab committee on Lebanon had decided to call for the summit in the light of the continued rebellion of Lebanese Army renegade Gen. Michel 'Awn.

They said that the committee would brief the Arab leaders on the outcome of its efforts and 'Awn's rejectionist stance of the al-Ta'if accord for national conciliation in (?this) country which impeded its full implementation.

The committee had blamed 'Awn in its last Monday [15 January] meeting for the deadlocked situation in Lebanon.

The sources said that Ibrahimi had informed Al-Huss with the committee's plan of visiting France, the Vatican and the U.S. to win those countries' practical support to the Lebanese legitimacy.

They pointed out that Ibrahimi himself will visit Vatican City to persuade Pope John Paul II to extend unequivocal backing to the al-Ta'if agreement.

Algerian Minister Assesses Meeting on Lebanon

LD1601110290 Algiers Television Service in Arabic 1900 GMT 15 Jan 90

[Text] The foreign ministers of the Arab tripartite committee met today in the Mithak Hotel. The meeting was attended by the tripartite committee's envoy, Mr Lakhdar Ibrahimi.

In their meeting, the members of the tripartite committee studied a working document which will be submitted to the leaders of the three countries: President Chadli Bendjedid, Moroccan King Hassan II, and Saudi King Fahd Ibn-'Abd-al-'Aziz.

It is noteworthy that Lakhdar Ibrahimi, the tripartite envoy, visited Lebanon and Damascus and met with Lebanese President Ilias al-Hirawi, Prime Minister Salim al-Huss, and Mr Husayn al-Husayni, speaker of the Lebanese Parliament. In Damascus, he also met with Syrian Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar'.

In a statement to the national press, Foreign Minister Sid Ahmed Ghazali, assessed the work of the meeting. He said:

[Begin Ghazali recording] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. The ministerial committee met today to assess the situation in Lebanon. It also discussed the draft report which will be sent by our leaders—the leaders of the Higher Arab Tripartite Committee on Lebanon—to their brother kings and presidents of the Arab countries.

The committee began its work with an audience with President Chadli Bendjedid. I think that our brother and colleague Prince Sa'ud told you after we left the president that the meeting was fruitful, and that the president gave us directives which were very useful and clarified our methods in handling many issues. Here I do not need to remind you that President Chadli is in continuous contact with his brother members of the commitee: His Majesty King Hassan II, and the custodian of the two holy mosques, King Fahd, and that they exchange views on events in Lebanon and on what their committee does. Therefore, what we heard this morning represents the result of this dialogue among the three leaders and their joint views on the Lebanese issue.

The committee finished the draft report, to which I referred earlier. This draft will be submitted to the three leaders. After recording their final comments on it, the report will be distributed to the fraternal countries. I would like to give you some general comments:

1. The committee has cooperated with all Lebanese, without exception. I think that the results we reached are not insignificant.

2. Unfortunately, there are obstacles and problems which obstruct this march and threaten the destruction of all that has been achieved, forcing Lebanon to return to what it was. It is being pushed back to fighting, destruction, and dispersal, and the other agonies which Lebanon suffered.

3. I recall that this committee, when it was formed after the Casablanca summit, was welcomed and supported by all the Lebanese, without exception, by all the Arabs without exception, and by the international community without exception. When the committee stopped its work in the middle of summer, urgent appeals and calls were made to it by all these Lebanese, Arab, and international sides to resume its mission. The committee responded and resumed its work. We achieved good results. Today, if it were not for these new obstacles, mainly the regrettable, mutinous, and rejectionist positin of General Michel 'Awn. [sentence as heard]

[Algiers Domestic Service in Arabic at 2200 GMT on 15 January records the continuation of Ghazali's remarks at this point: "I would like to draw the attention of the parties I mentioned earlier—Lebanese, Arab, and international—to the extreme seriousness of this situation. I call on them to make the effort necessitated by this situation to remove the obstacles and enable the march [words indistinct]. In this context, we must express the great pain that we feel over to the events taking place today in the Lebanese arena, in western Biqa's Iqlim

al-Tuffah region, between the Hizballah and Amal movement. These are very serious events which threaten unity of ranks and the (?peace) process [words indistinct]."]

4. Here I add that the members of the committee are still committed to supporting the Lebanese people and their legitimate institutions in facing up to the problems which obstruct their way. [end recording]

ACC Ministerial Council Holds 2d Session

JN1701142690 Baghdad Voice of the Masses in Arabic 1300 GMT 17 Jan 90

[Text] Baghdad—The second session of the Arab Cooperation Council [ACC] Ministerial Council began in Baghdad at noon today with meetings of prime ministers and foreign ministers.

During this session, they will complete discussions on the draft resolutions and agreements that will be submitted to the 4th ACC summit to be held in Amman next month.

Planning Ministers Confer

JN1701144290 Baghdad INA in English 1250 GMT 17 Jan 90

[Text] Baghdad, Jan. 17, INA—Mr. Samal Majid Faraj, Iraqi minister of planning, today met with planning ministers in Arab Cooperation Council (ACC) countries attending ACC's ministerial committee meetings.

The meeting discussed a draft agreement on cooperation and coordination in fields of planning, including a long-term development strategy for ACC member states, development trends and the general framework for ACC regional plans in various economic sectors.

The agreement pointed to aspects of coordination among short- and medium-term development plans and investment rules.

Final Session Held

JN1701204290 Baghdad Domestic Service in Arabic 1700 GMT 17 Jan 90

[Text] Meetings of the third and final session of the Ministerial Council of the Arab Cooperation Council [ACC] began this evening.

INA has learned that during this evening's session, the prime ministers, deputy prime ministers, and cabinet ministers will review the results of the two previous sessions and discuss a number of agreements that govern joint cooperation in all spheres. The ACC prime ministers are expected to hold a news conference at the end of the session.

Ramadan Holds News Conference

JN1801103490 Baghdad Voice of the Masses in Arabic 0500 GMT 18 Jan 90

[Text] Taha Yasin Ramadan, Revolution Command Council member and first deputy prime minister, has announced that during the meetings of the Ministerial Council of the Arab Cooperation Council [ACC], a number of agreements governing common action among the ACC countries in all fields were approved. He announced this in a news conference held at the conference palace at the end of the final session. The news conference was attended by correspondents from local, Arab, and foreign media and news agencies and the INA. He said the accomplishments, particularly those concerning the regulation of cooperation in the fields of science, technology, oil, energy, gas, tourism, local government, meteorology, civil aviation, the movement of people and goods, land and air transport, and religious, medical and municipal affairs, are a source of pride and serve the glorious objectives of the ACC. He said a host of instructions and decisions were made by the Ministerial Council to regulate and promote mechanisms of action. These include the establishment of cooperation projects, the organization of data and document exchange, and the employment of the best studies and research in scientific and industrial fields.

Mr Ramadan said that a special meeting of the ACC heads of governments was held yesterday morning to coordinate political positions at Arab and international organizations in order to reach a common formula and exchange information of concern to the Arabs and, consequently, to crystallize scientific opinions on this information. He said the Ministerial Council's meetings were very productive, not only in terms of the agreements reached, but also in terms of the agreements that will be implemented in accordance with their shape and size. [sentence as heard]

During the news conference, the prime ministers of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, the Yemen Arab Republic, and the Arab Republic of Egypt expressed great satisfaction with the agreements reached, which serve the interests of the ACC and Arab citizens.

Islamic Affairs

ICO Official on Iran-Iraq Peace Process

LD0901232390 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 2015 GMT 9 Jan 90

[Text] Jeddah, 9 Jan (SPA)—The Islamic Conference Organization (ICO) has reiterated its readiness to help prepare the groundwork to push forward the UN-sponsored peace process between Iraq and Iran.

In a statement issued today, ICO Secretary General Dr Hamid al-Ghabid said: At a time when a number of regions of the world are witnessing winds of qualitative change, I believe it is time for both Iran and Iraq to make

all-out efforts and mobilize all their resources to move toward peace and achieve the common economic and social development to which their people aspire.

Dr al-Ghabid expressed the fears of the Islamic nation regarding the slow progress of the UN-sponsored negotiations process despite the diligent efforts of Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar.

The ICO secretary general added: "The latest peace proposals of His Excellency President Saddam Husayn, president of the Republic of Iraq, renew our hope the doors to dialogue are not closed forever."

He also expressed the hope that the two countries would benefit from all the opportunities to develop and enrich the dialogue taking place under the auspices of the UN secretary general to implement UN Security Council Resolution 598, pointing out that resolution constituted—according to the international community—the foundation for a just, durable, and comprehensive solution to the conflict between the two countries.

Dr al-Ghabid called on the leaders of the two countries to work with courage, wisdom, and reflection in seeking a real, comprehensive peace and to make the Gulf a lake of peace and progress.

The ICO secretary general called on the permanent member states of the UN Security Council and on the international community to strongly support these efforts.

Palestinian Affairs

PNC Speaker on Peace Efforts, Emigration

JN1601165690 Amman SAWT AL-SHA'B in Arabic 16 Jan 90 p 16

[By Sa'd al-Silawi and Ibtisam Agha]

[Text] Amman—Palestine National Council [PNC] Speaker Shaykh 'Abd-al-Hamid al-Sa'ih has said that the call made by Dr George Habash, secretary general of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, for holding an extraordinary PNC session is under careful consideration so that what is best for the national interest, for the Palestine cause, and for the blessed intifadah in the West Bank and Gaza Strip can be endorsed. He added that these considerations would help the PLO take the proper measures.

In an exclusive statement to SAWT AL-SHA'B, the PNC speaker said that no decision has yet been made by the PLO Executive Committee, or by one fourth of the PNC members calling for the convening of the extraordinary session.

The PNC speaker indicated that the PNC's ordinary term has ended. He added that this requires the formation of a new PNC to draw up the bases, guidelines, and rules according to which the new PNC will be formed. [sentence as published]

Shaykh al-Sa'ih announced that several proposals have been made, one of which calls for reducing the number of the PNC members and another for increasing their number. Shaykh al-Sa'ih went on to say: The competent committee has not yet completed its discussion of these issues. Moreover, it has not reached any final conclusions or decisions on the matter.

Shaykh al-Sa'ih said: If the United States and Israel persist in their intransigent positions rejecting the Palestinian peace initiative, we will call the PNC into extraordinary session in accordance with the PNC's basic law and bylaws, simply because the Palestinian people cannot allow their cause to be suspended between heaven and earth without a decisive resolution on it.

Shaykh al-Sa'ih said that Jordanian-Palestinian relations are distinguished. He added that several PNC sessions have acknowledged this distinctive feature of Jordanian-Palestinian ties and have stressed that they must be based on a confederation between the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and the state of Palestine, once the Palestinian state is established on Palestinian national soil.

The PNC speaker added that relations between the Jordanian and Palestinian parliaments are, like the ties between the two peoples, based on understanding, fraternal sentiments, and independent decisionmaking. He expressed his appreciation for the important ideas put forward by the Jordanian deputies on the Palestine question, its future, and the results of the disengagement decision.

Shaykh al-Sa'ih expressed the hope that the Jordanian committee formed to discuss the negative effects of the disengagement decision, under chairman Salim Masa'idah, deputy prime minister and interior minister, would achieve results serving the interests of the Palestinian people and remove the negative effects that followed the decision to sever ties with the West Bank. He added: I hope that the final result will be the removal of all obstacles and problems that have created difficulties for Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

The PNC speaker said that Jordan's decision to sever ties with the West Bank—in response to an Arab desire; namely, that the PLO be the sole, legitimate representative of the Palestinian people—does not mean that Jordan has relinquished its political responsibilities regarding the Palestine question. He added: Nor does this mean that the PLO will make decisions singlehandedly in this regard. That is why consultations and contacts between Palestinian and Jordanian officials, headed by His Majesty King Husayn, have continued.

This situation satisfies both the Jordanian and Palestinian peoples and helps fulfill their ambitions and cherished aspirations.

Asked about Israeli-U.S. attempts to exclude the PLO and Jordan from the peace process, Shaykh al-Sa'ih said: Any attempt to exclude the PLO or Jordan from the peace process will be doomed to failure, because each one is a basic pillar in the process and in reaching the shore of safety through an effective international conference in which the five permanent member states of the Security Council are represented. Peace cannot be established without the state of Palestine and the Kingdom of Jordan.

Regarding the Israeli rulers' plans and utterances about the alternative homeland, Shaykh al-Sa'ih said Israel's reiteration of this idea is abhorrent, as it conforms with neither the Palestinian nor the Jordanian people's wishes. The idea that Jordan is the Palestinians' alternative homeland is unacceptable to us in both form and substance. No Palestinian accepts this idea, because we consider Jordan, under its present system and people, as a support for us. We must preserve this country in the same manner that it is preserving our struggle and upholding our initiative.

He said that the threats made by the occupation authorities, particularly Sharon and others, are a clear indication of the bankruptcy and failure of the Zionist policy. Such threats, he said, are meant to exert pressure on the intifadah and the Palestinian people. We know that the intifadah's struggle and heroism will bear fruit and will not be intimidated by Sharon's threats. We will foil all Zionist methods, which are a clear indication of the failure and futility of the Zionist policy.

Regarding the emigration of Soviet Jews, Shaykh al-Sa'ih said: The Palestinian people are suffering from the occupation authorities' oppression and cruelty. What is being reported about the Soviet Union's approval of the emigration of more Jews will increase the dangers and injustices inflicted on the Palestinian people. I hope that the friendly Soviet Union will curb the emigration out of concern for the attainment of a just peace in this region, and to avoid the aggravation of the worries and dangers to which the Palestinian people are exposed.

Asked about armed struggle, Shaykh al-Sa'ih said no decision excluding armed struggle has been issued by either the Executive Committee or the National Council. We are seeking a peace that secures our legitimate rights and enables us to obtain our right to self-determination and the establishment of the Palestinian state, whose capital is Jerusalem, under the PLO, the Palestinian people's sole, legitimate representative. He stressed that if Israel and the United States persist in their attitude, this will expedite the holding of a National Council session to decide on the steps to be taken to safeguard the future of our people's cause and their valiant intifadah.

Regarding Syrian-Palestinian relations, he said they are moving forward in one way or another, but have not yet reached the desired final level. On the impact of the restoration of Syrian-Egyptian relations, he said: We were pleased by the restoration of ties, because any improvement in relations between any two countries increases our power and supports our causes. Therefore, we welcome the restoration and hope things will continue in this direction so that the Arabs can become stronger and develop a better understanding. We attach great hopes on Arab solidarity so that the world, particularly the United States and Israel, will feel that the Arabs share a unified position on this issue.

Shamir's Policies Result of U.S. 'Pampering'

JN1401150290 Baghdad Voice of the PLO in Arabic 1840 GMT 13 Jan 90

[Unattributed commentary]

[Text] Head of the enemy Israeli Government, Yitzhaq Shamir, has spared no efforts in accumulating evidence that indicts him as the absolute antithesis of peace. He has not let one day pass without reinforcing it by beating the drums of rejection. He says no to the slightest indication of the possibility that a minimum level of progress in Middle East peace efforts might be achieved; and yes to every stumbling block facing every sign toward the minimum level of peace. This is the terrorist Yitzhaq Shamir—the ideal symbol of Zionist arrogance. Recently, it seems that his reckless claptrap has begun to embarrass even the U.S. Administration, his strategic ally, which provides his usurping entity with the means of its unjust tyranny.

If it is true that the U.S. Administration is really dissatisfied with Shamir's endless no's, this is not because of tangible progress in its position toward the peace process in the Middle East, for this administration still adheres [words indistinct] but this is due to Shamir's arrogance and his rejection of the U.S. stance, brushing aside even his U.S. ally's plan—which is in keeping with the provisions of his so-called election plan.

The U.S. State Department claims that it censured Yitzhaq Shamir's government because of the latter's continuation of its policy, which refuses to respond to U.S. endeavors to achieve progress in the Middle East peace process. However, what does the U.S. reprimand to Shamir mean [words indistinct], especially as the situation in the Middle East is now, more than ever, about to explode because of the outbreak of the glorious Palestinian intifadah, which is a result of Israel's continued policy of aggression and arrogance and the daily display of terrorist, tyrannical power?

The U.S. Administration is the first to blame for what might happen in the Middle East, in view of its unparalleled pampering of the Zionist entity and its blind eye to the practices and policies of the terrorist Israeli Government. The U.S. display of putting some blame on Yitzhaq Shamir's no's is merely a failed U.S. charade designed to exonerate the U.S. from the responsibility of hampering the peace process in the Middle East. If the

U.S. Administration honestly seeks to achieve a just and honorable peace in the Middle East, it cannot only tame Yitzhaq Shamir, as James Baker advises Jewish leaders in the United States to do, but it can also remove him as an obstacle to international efforts to settle the Middle East conflict.

It is within the power of the U.S. Administration to do this and more, and not just show a little bashful dissatisfaction with Israeli arrogance. On the other hand, the Israeli enemy continues to offer compelling evidence for people near and far that it is an aggressive, expansionist, racist, and terrorist entity. All these are harbingers of war and destruction at a time when the world is heading toward peace and stability. Can any peace be established in the world without a just peace in the Middle East; in other words, without Palestinian peace?

Postponement of Tripartite Meeting Analyzed

LD1501235890 Algiers Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1702 GMT 15 Jan 90

[Station commentary: "Why Was The Tripartite Meeting of the American, Egyptian, and Israeli Foreign Ministers Postponed?"]

[Text] The U.S. State Department's announcement indicates that the reason behind this postponement is the U.S. Administration's desire to complete preparations to a conference. What do these words signify according to the lexicon of U.S. diplomacy? They signify a recognition that Israel's stance on the issues to be discussed has not changed, which would make the meeting fruitless and useless.

At the same time, Israeli newspapers have published reports on new U.S. proposals presented to Israel. These proposals, even if they do not respond to all Israeli demands presented to the U.S. Government last month by Shamir's envoy (Rubenstein), are considered a new U.S. maneuver to avoid dealing with the Palestinian issue.

It is known that the crux of the Israeli stance is based on two points: The first is the refusal to let the PLO form the Palestinian delegation; the second is the refusal to allow the agenda of the talks to remain open. The Americans are trying to revive the Camp David talks on autonomy by shuffling words and softening the strength of rejection by enemy Prime Minister Shamir.

Now what is the Palestinian stance on these Israeli-U.S. talks and messages about the essence of the Palestinian cause? The Palestinian stance has been clear from the beginning. The PLO announced that it has no connection with the Washington talks, and that these talks do not concern it.

This Palestinian stance is based on the PLO's stance toward Washington's policy on holding talks about the so-called elections in the occupied territories. The PLO has always announced that the duty to form any Palestinian delegation for any talks concerning the Palestinian cause is the PLO's task, and that the declaration of the composition of that delegation is also the PLO's task. The PLO has also stressed that the agenda for the talks should be open, and should lead to peace talks under the auspices of an international conference.

Both Washington and Tel Aviv are aware of the truth of this Palestinian stance. The two allies, however, are still under the illusion that it is possible to determine the Palestinians' future according to their own policies and goals.

It is amusing that the game has reached a degree of absurdity wherein Washington, through its secretary of state, submits proposals, the PLO presents its ideas and stances, Shamir refuses, Washington then talks to Shamir and gives him a concession here or there, and the end result is just a waste of time. This is because Shamir's rejection or acceptance does not affect the Palestinian stance or dislodge it from its firm grounds. Washington's pursuit of peace therefore often appears as if the dialogue between Baker and Shamir were a dialogue between the deaf.

What is proven until now, as far as the U.S. stance is concerned, is the fact that Washington, in all the stages of its effort to solve the Palestinian problem—especially during President Bush's era—has not taken any stance indicating a serious move toward peace. The U.S. Adminstration, or the U.S. State Department in particular, seem to be busy solving the puzzle presented by Shamir. Shamir wants to convince Washington that the Palestinian people do not have the right to self-determination—even if free elections were to take place in the West Bank and Gaza Strip—and that the Palestinian people have no representative, even if they were to agree unanimously that the PLO is their sole,legitimate representative. Shamir wants to convince everyone that God's will, and his own, cannot allow the Palestinians more than autonomy, and so on, based on completely illogical and unreal assumptions. In spite of this, all this time Bush and Baker are preoccupied in understanding this and solving the puzzle.

The road to peace is clear. The aims of peace are very clear. The means to achieve peace are also as clear as daylight. They are the aims which are recognized by the human laws for all peoples, and through which we reached the solution which made our world a free and civilized one. Peace lies in the Zionist enemy's recognition of the Palestinian people's right to self-determination, and in the withdrawal of the occupiers and their oppressive forces from the streets, towns, camps, and villages of the occupied Palestinian territories. Peace lies in accepting the will of the Palestinians and their right to choose their representatives, to declare their stances and to defend their legitimate national rights. These are the foundations for peace, and this is the road to it: Anything else is a waste of time and merely

plays with the destiny of the Palestinian people, which will only lead to regional war, and destabilize the region as well as the whole world.

Palestinian Movements To Meet in Tunis

LD1701141390 Tunis Domestic Service in Arabic 1300 GMT 17 Jan 90

[Text] A prominent Palestinian official has announced that within the next 2 weeks Tunis will see extended meetings of the movements which are grouped in the PLO.

Abu-'Ali Mustafa, assistant secretary general of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, said that the question of convening an ordinary session of the Palestine National Council will be among the main subjects open to discussion during these meetings.

'Arafat Adviser on Talks With Israel, East Europe

JN1701132890 Manama WAKH in Arabic 0810 GMT 17 Jan 90

[Text] Manama, 17 Jan (WAKH)—In a press statement published in Manama today, Dr Nabil Sha'th, adviser to the Palestinian president, has stressed that the efforts being exerted to arrange negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians are heading toward a dead end so long as Shamir is in power and so long as the U.S. Administration supports him and dares not pressure him.

In a statement to the newspaper AKHBAR AL-KHALIJ, Dr Sha'th said: Our strategic hope is pinned on the Palestinian intifadah and on achieving its objectives inside Israel and on the level of the world public opinion toward toppling this government and proceeding toward a true peace, and not merely preliminary steps.

Regarding the changes in Eastern Europe and their effects on the Palestine question and struggle, Dr Sha'th said: In the short run, these changes have negative effects, including the encouragement of Jewish emigration to Israel, the opening of new prospects for the establishment of relations with Israel, diverting the USSR's attention from the Palestine question, especially as the USSR seeks to establish relations on another level with the United States.

Sha'th added: However, in the long run, these changes will be in the interest of the cause, because they will create a unified Europe that is independent from the U.S. hegemony; consequently, this will reduce the strategic importance of Israel and increase East Europe's interest in the issues of human rights and the intifadah.

PLO Adviser on Cairo Dialogue, Arab Relations

JN1301114090 Manama WAKH in Arabic 1040 GMT 13 Jan 90

[Text] Doha, 13 Jan (WAKH)—Hani al-Hasan, political adviser to Palestinian president Yasir 'Arafat, has ruled out the occurrence of any positive results from the proposed Palestinian-Israeli dialogue in Cairo. He said that Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir will not present anything positive.

In a statement to the Qatari newspaper AL-RAYAH published today, Al-Hasan said that the PLO is engaging in maneuvers to complete this dialogue "because when it ends without any results, the only option for the United States will be to call for convening an international peace conference, which the PLO considers as the only alternative."

Hani al-Hasan reiterated the PLO's willingness to hold elections in the occupied territory, but only within the framework of a plan for achieving a comprehensive solution to the Palestine question.

Al-Hasan noted the difference between the PLO and the Islamic Hamas Movement in the occupied territories. He said the difference is not ideological, but concerns how to run the conflict with the enemy. He said there is coordination between the two sides and the PLO welcomes Hamas' joining of the Palestine National Council.

'Arafat's political adviser welcomed the initiative by Khalid al-Fahum, chairman of the Palestine National Salvation Front, calling for the reunification of the Palestinian factions within the PLO. He said the coming stage will witness a Syrian-Palestinian rapprochement, and consequently all opposition forces of the PLO will return to it. He also welcomed Egyptian-Syrian rapprochement, noting the importance of Egypt's return to Arab ranks on the pan-Arab level and on the course of the Arab-Israeli conflict.

With regard to the USSR's distancing itself from the PLO, the political adviser to Yasir 'Arafat said that the PLO believes that this distancing is not positive for the course of the conflict in the region and will be in the interest of the United States, which wants to deal unilaterally with the region.

Moscow TV Interviews 'Amr, Weizman

LD1401235890 Moscow Television Service in Russian 1530 GMT 14 Jan 90

[From the "Seven Days" program]

[Excerpts] [Krutov] Now for yet another example of the unpredictable changes that sometimes take place in contemporary politicians. One of the heroes of our next material is one of the most well-known politicians of the State of Israel, 'Ezer Weizman. [passage omitted]

[Kiselev] Today is the 768th day of the intifadah, the Palestinian uprising on the Israeli-occupied territories. Each new day brings more bloodshed, more victims. A peaceful settlement to the problem is needed. Dialogue is needed. But is such a thing possible between the main

protagonists of the conflict: the Israelis and the Palestinians? Or, to be more specific, between the Israeli Government and the Palestinian Liberation Organization? Until recently talk on this topic was just talk. Today, on the "Seven Days" program, such talk is being held by representatives of both sides involved: Nabil 'Amr, a Palestinian politician and diplomat and the head of the PLO mission in Moscow which, this week, on 10 January, was transformed into the Embassy of the state of Palestine, with the consent of the Soviet Union; 'Ezer Weizman, Israeli minister of science and development. [passage omitted]

And so, is a direct dialogue possible between representatives of Israel and the PLO?

[Begin recording] ['Amr] The PLO has nothing against any kind of talks or direct contacts with representatives of Israel, be they government or public figures.

[Weizman] The Israeli Government's policy is for no dialogue with the PLO. I, on the other hand, am one of the members of the cabinet who expresses a different view. I say yes. [passage omitted]

[Interviewer] If, let us assume, during your stay in Moscow one of the Palestinian representatives working here asked you to meet him, would you accept such an invitation?

[Weizman] No, I would not. I would refuse for the simple reason that if I wanted to meet with any of the PLO leaders, I would not need to come to Moscow to do so.

[Interviewer] Tell me, if while in Moscow Weizman wanted to, say, meet you personally, or one of the Palestinian representatives, what would your reaction be?

['Amr] As far as I am concerned, I would agree, without doubt. [passage omitted]

[Weizman] I believe that indirect talks, with the courteous mediation of Egypt and the United States, could produce some results, but I am sure that it is better for talks to be conducted directly. This is the correct path for our country if it wants to live in peace and security.

['Amr] We value any attempt, any efforts aimed at seeking a solution to the Middle East conflict, as long as they take into consideration the interests of the Palestinian people, their right to self-determination, and the right of the PLO to participate in the settlement process. [passage omitted] [end recording]

Egypt

Interior Minister Musa To Release Detainees

NC1701125190 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1155 GMT 17 Jan 90

[Excerpt] Cairo, 17 (MENA)—MENA has learned that, on the instructions of President Husni Mubarak, Interior Minister Muhammad 'Abd-al-Halim Musa is currently making a comprehensive review of the lists of detainees in order to learn the circumstances under which each person was detained. He will then submitting a detailed report on this issue to the president.

An official security source has stated that a number of detainees will be released in the coming stage, particularly those who have obtained court rulings on their release. The source declined to reveal the number of detainees in Egypt, pointing out that recent detentions, carried out in accordance with the emergency law, have involved several major drug and currency dealers, profiteers in the black market in food, members of extremist groups, and criminals who pose a threat to public security in the country. [passage omitted]

Comments on Emergency Law, Detainees

NC1701160290 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1145 GMT 17 Jan 90

[Text] Cairo, 17 Jan (MENA)—Muhammad 'Abd-al-Halim Musa, the new interior minister, has said that the supremacy of the law will be fully upheld and no excesses will be committed against any detainee regardless of the charges against him. The law will have the final word, he said.

In an interview with the magazine AL-MUSAWWAR, which it will publish in its Friday edition, the minister said that President Husni Mubarak has instructed law enforcement officials to protect the democratic gains of the people and to act decisively, firmly, and in strict compliance with the law against any acts that may compromise the stability and security of the country.

Musa underlined the fact that opposition is an integral part of the regime and that freedom of speech and of dissent is guaranteed by law. Those who dissent for the sake of the country are in my opinion as worthy as those who support the government for the sake of the country, he said. The opposition is useful to the government because it exposes the government's mistakes and no one is above making mistakes, he added.

As for how he sees the task of his ministry, Musa said that the interior minister should seek to provide the citizens with safety and security. I will consider myself successful only if every citizen feels secure and safe. Long ago I vowed to God that I would not tolerate injustice against others, against myself, or against the country.

In the interview, Muhammad 'Abd-al-Halim Musa emphasized that the emergency law will not be used for any purpose other than those for which it was adopted and will be applied within very strict limits.

The interior minister said that the public prosecutor's office is currently reviewing complaints by detainees. He added that those who are released by the prosecutor's office will not have their liberty taken away for one moment.

He explained that the Interior Ministry will not prevent or restrict the holding of meetings or conferences by political parties, societies, and clubs as long as they remain within the law and do not depart from legitimate practice.

Regarding his views on combating narcotics, the interior minister said he is placing the fight against drugs at the top of the list of the problems to which his ministry will devote additional efforts. He noted that the efforts which the General Department for Combating Drugs made this year and last year prove its efficiency. He noted that the Europeans themselves have vouched for these efforts.

Report on MENA Interview

NC1501155190 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1107 GMT 15 Jan 90

[Report by Ahmad 'Abd-al-Jawad, and 'Abdallah Hasan]

[Text] Cairo, 15 Jan (MENA)—The new Interior Minister Muhammad 'Abd-al-Halim Musa stressed that the supremacy of law is above all citizens whatever their political trends and that judiciary verdicts have respect and sanctity and must be applied to outlaws without excesses or infringing on the law. He asserted that in the forthcoming stage there will be no excesses of the law or violation of the Egyptian man's dignity. He emphasized that he will do nothing to destroy the Egyptian man or harm his dignity, because "we all are sons of this homeland and there is no distinction between a supporter and an opponent as long as they comply by law, legality, and constitution."

This came in an exclusive statement to MENA by the interior minister on the third day after he took office, his first comprehensive statement since he was assigned the post on Friday. He emphasized that combating drugs will be his main preoccupation in the forthcoming stage and that this issue commands a major part of his attention in view of its destructive effects on youth, economy, and Egyptian society. He called on the competent quarters, be they information media or religious, political, or educational institutions, to cooperate with the security organs to eliminate this hazardous phenomenon.

Musa said: As interior minister I am not ready to abuse the law or hamper a verdict delivered by the judiciary or a decision made by the public prosecution. As a member of the government, I will not contravene the verdicts of

the judiciary. I emphasize that the judiciary is an independent authority that is controlled only by the conscience of the judge who hands down a verdict.

Musa stressed his rspect for and appreciation of the opposition in Egypt as part of the order. He said: We mean the genuine definition of democracy, as President Mubarak has constantly declared that he is president of all sons of Egypt with all their classes and trends. He pointed out that the relationship and bridges between himself and the various parties will remain strong in the interest of Egypt and to ensure prosperity, peace, and security for all citizens in the homeland.

He pointed out that the opposition, like all segments of society, enjoys security, education, medical treatment, and other services; and opposition members do their military service when asked to like the rest of the sons of the homeland. He said that he will be in the service of the opposition as long as it does not violate security. Should security and order be violated, the law will be applied and we will not exaggerate things. He said that the opposition parties have a right to hold seminars and meetings in Cairo, Alexandria, and the various governorates. This right is also guaranteed to all trade unions as long as they observe the law and do not violate the Consitution.

Asked whether the emergency law will be lifted in the coming stage, the interior minister said this law was issued by a responsible legislative authority in a certain contingency which still exists. He asserted, however, that democracy and individual freedoms will not be affected by the emergency law, which was originally enacted to safeguard society's and the citizen's security, freedom, and safety.

He pointed out that the emergency law was enforced for a certain emergency situation and that its application is governed by measures so that it might not be exceeded or abused. A good citizen has nothing to fear from this law and anyone who wants to abrogate it now without giving due considertion to the exigencies of its existence will either take a certain interest in doing so or fear it will be applied against him, he said. He asserted that there are many guarantees which ensure that the law will not be misused against honest citizens. There are special departments for filing grievances, and court rulings are respected.

The interior minister pointed out that the challenges requiring the existence of the emergency law are represented in the attempts to undermine the economic stability, manipulate foreign currencies and the masses' livelihood, and trade in heroine and other drugs. Many of the states that preceded us in applying democracy enforced stricter laws than the ones applied in Egypt. These states go as far as using firearms against outlaws to protect society and its citizens.

On reports about torturing prisoners in Egyptian jails, the interior minister asserted that these reports are groundless, because the Egyptian prisons are governed by certain regulations and are subject to inspection by the prosecutor's office and the judiciary. Any official in the prosecutor's office is authorized to inspect the prisons and report to higher judicial panels, he said.

The interior minister asked: In whose interest would we torture prisoners, political or otherwise? The law is the only judge, he asserted.

Asked about his plan to confront extremism, after his successful experience as Asyut governor, 'Abd-al-Halim Musa said: Extremism is rejected in its various forms, be it political, religious, or ideological. He appealed to all authorities concerned to join forces to eliminate this phenomenon.

The interior minister said: As a security man, it is my duty to confront extremism and put an end to it, because it undermines society's security. All state departments are required to play their role in this. The task should not be left to the security authorities alone, he said.

Musa asserted that the policy of the Interior Ministry is part of the state's policy to stand up to any violation of the law or the system. He said there is nothing called religious groups in the true Islamic religion. Instead, there is a Muslim society which embraces all Muslims without discrimination.

He noted that during his tenure in office as governor of Asyut, he held lengthy dialogues with these groups and asked them to preach as they wished inside the mosques but not in the streets, and not to commit any violation against the citizens.

Asked about his plan for the coming period in applying the motto, "Police are at the service of the people," the interior minister said the police are here to serve the people, not to insult them, and everyone must know this. He added: I will not permit any violation of Egyptians' dignity or insults to any of them anywhere. He said our objective in the coming period is to have more discipline on the Egyptian streets, and therefore citizens are requested to abide by the laws. By their conduct, they will help the policemen achieve this goal.

Minister Musa added: I was chosen to work as Asyut governor on Wednesday 20 October 1987, when I was honored by his excellency the president to be selected to the job of serving the people of Asyut. I took it upon myself to be a faithful and dedicated servant of the toilers and poor among the people of Asyut. Now that I have become the inteior minister and responsible for the security of the citizens throughout Egypt, all my colleagues within the ministry are required to work with me as a team in the same style, he added.

Concerning the future security coopertion between Egypt and the Arab countries, the interior minister said security cooperation ties between Egypt and its sister Arab countries had never been disrupted, not even during the absence of formal diplomatic relations between them. During that period, he added, I lectured

at a number of police institutes in the Arab world and there was full exchange of information between the two sides. I took part in several seminars in which all the Arab states were represented and during which Egypt played a prominent role. During my term as director of the Public Security Department from 1983 until I was appointed Asyut governor in 1987, I had the honor of organizing some of these security-related symposiums, he added.

In conclusion, the interior minister stressed the importance of inter-Arab cooperation to consolidate security and stability throughout the Arab world. He said there are continued exchanges between Egypt and the Arab states now that things are back to normal. He referred in this respect to the large security gathering in Cairo last month, when the Arab interior ministers held their 8th session.

Mubarak Chairs Meeting; Al-Sharif Comments

NC1501131590 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1041 GMT 15 Jan 90

[Excerpts] Cairo, 15 Jan (MENA)—President Husni Mubarak held an expanded meeting at the Presidential Palace this morning. It was attended by Dr Rif'at al-Mahjub, People's Assembly Speaker; Prime Minister Dr 'Atif Sidqi; Dr 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid, deputy prime minister and foreign minister; Dr Kamal al-Janzuri, deputy prime minister and planning minister; Dr Yusuf Wali, deputy prime minister and minister of agriculture and land reclamation; and Dr Salah Hamid, the Central Bank governor. [passage omitted]

During the 1 ½ hour meeting, President Mubarak discussed a Foreign Ministry report on developments in the Palestinian issue as well as contacts on this matter with the United States, the PLO, and other concerned parties. After the meeting, Information Minister Safwat al-Sharif said that President Mubarak had noted the visit to the United States by Dr 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid, deputy prime minister and foreign minister, and had stated that he would give him a message for U.S. Secretary of State James Baker on this issue.

Al-Sharif pointed out that Prime Minister Sidqi reviewed a report on the country's economic performance, the steps being taken by the government, and the result of cooperation with the Arab Monetary Fund. It also reviewed the results of the current negotiations with the IMF and differences in views over Egypt's policy, which pursues a line consistent with the citizens' ability to afford to buy goods and with securing commodities and basic services at reasonable prices. [passage omitted]

Minister on 'Crisis' With Ethiopia Over Nile

JN1401163290 Cairo AL-WAFD in Arabic 12 Jan 90 pp 1, 2

[By Jamal Yunus]

[Excerpt] Engineer 'Isam Radi, minister of works and water resources, gave details yesterday of the crisis between Egypt and Ethiopia over the Nile waters. The minister told the Consultative Council that Egypt intervened last year to persuade international financing institutions to stop financing Ethiopian projects on the White Nile. He pointed out that Ethiopia did not consult Egypt when it decided to implement the project.

The minister said that Egypt is monitoring every movement and every drop of water in the Nile basin and that Egypt has sent Egyptian engineers to Uganda, one of the countries in which the Nile originates, to monitor and review Egypt's share of the waters. He also disclosed Ethiopia's objection to the implementation of some projects, which the United Nations studied last October, saying that Egypt would reply to the objection next May. He said that Ethiopia objected to the building of the Aswan High Dam early in the 1960's.

The minister rejected demands by members of the Consultative Council that military force be used to protect the Nile waters. He said that the best way to deal with the issue is peacefully. [passage omitted]

Prime Minister Sidqi Returns From Baghdad

NC1801071690 Cairo Domestic Service in Arabic 0500 GMT 18 Jan 90

[Text] Prime Minister Dr 'Atif Sidqi and the delegation accompanying him returned to Cairo from Baghdad yesterday evening, having attended the meetings of the Arab Cooperation Council [ACC] ministerial panel, which concluded in Baghdad yesterday.

During his 3-day visit to Iraq, Dr Sidqi delivered a message from President Husni Mubarak to Iraqi President Saddam Husayn. He also met with the members of the Egyptian community in Iraq.

Upon his return, Dr Sidqi stated that the purpose of the 3d session of the ACC ministerial panel which was held in Baghdad was to prepare for the ACC summit meeting scheduled for February. He noted that the panel agreed on a number of recommendations which will be referred to the summit. The agreements are related to the various spheres of cooperation among ACC countries, including tourism, land, air, and maritime transport and scientific research.

UAE Economy Minister Concludes Visit

NC1101192690 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1737 GMT 11 Jan 90

[Text] Cairo, 11 Jan (MENA)—Sayf al-Jarwan, United Arab Emirates [UAE] economy and trade minister, left Cairo for home tonight, following a 4-day visit to Egypt during which he met President Husni Mubarak.

In a departure statement, al-Jarwan said that during his stay he discussed with Egyptian officials ways of bolstering cooperation between the two countries in the fields of tourism, agriculture, land reclamation, and meat production.

Al-Jarwan said that he discussed with Economy Minister Dr Yustri Mustafa bilateral industrial cooperation, participation in trade and industrial exhibitions, and cooperation in the fields of health and pharmaceuticals and between the chambers of commerce and industry in both countries.

Dr Mustafa and UAE Embassy staff accompanied the UAE minister to the airport.

Libya

U.S. Troops Continue To Patrol Embassy in Panama

LD1701131590 Tripoli Domestic Service in Arabic 1230 GMT 17 Jan 90

[Text] Since the first days of their barbarous invasion of Panama, U.S. troops have been laying siege on the Libyan Arab People's Bureau in Panama and imposing oppressive measures on the bureau's staff by searching them when they enter or leave the building, asking them to show their identity cards and recording times they enter and leave.

A press report received by JANA from Panama says that a number of U.S. troops are patrolling the street where the Libyan Arab People's Bureau is located, and that U.S. troops are stationed opposite the building. The Americans have dismissed the normal guards from their allocated office in the bureau's building.

Syria, Iraq Media Ignore Leader's News Conference

LD1401185190 Tripoli Domestic Service in Arabic 1330 GMT 14 Jan 90

[Excerpts] The Arab, African, Asian, and European press have continued to attach great importance to the issues touched upon by the brother leader in his international news conference in the presence of a great crowd of reporters from Arab and international news agencies, radio and television networks, newspapers and magazines. [passage omitted]

These news media in Algeria, Tunisia, Morocco, Sudan, Kuwait, Qatar, Bahrain, the United Arab Emirates, and Lebanon have highlighted the leader's call for Jews to emigrate from Arab Palestine and return to their countries of origin. But news media in Iraq and Syria have been the exception and failed to mention this international news conference and the important topics dealt with by the brother leader in the conference. [passage omitted]

Ceausescu Paid 'Millions' for Jewish Emigration

LD1501153190 Tripoli JANA in English 1420 GMT 15 Jan 90

[Text] Washington, A'ina al-Nar [January] 15, JAMAHIRIYAH NEWS AGENCY—News agencies has revealed that the Zionist enemy has paid millions of dollars to the deposed Romanian President Ceausescu as a price for the emigration of Romanian Jews to occupied Palestine.

Mention should be made that Ceausescu permitted between 120-150 thousand Romanian Jews to emigrate to occupied Palestine since 1967, namely, for the last 32 years.

Al-Qadhdhafi on Causes of Unrest in East Europe

LD1301104290 Tripoli JANA in English 1650 GMT 12 Jan 90

[Text] Tripoli, A'ina Al-Nar [January] 13 JAMAHIRIYAH NEWS AGENCY—Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi the leader of the Great al-Fatih Revolution asserted that amongst the reasons for toppling the ruling regimes of Eastern Europe was the state monopoly of wealth and the political oppression of the masses.

During his meeting with the political sciences students at the international Nasir University and the students of both Qar Yunis and Sabha [names as received] Universities. He said "When the masses felt that they were able to express themselves they took to the streets in successive demonstrations which reached armed revolution as happened in Romania." He pointed out that it was possible to avoid even the shedding of one drop of blood if the Central Committee of the ruling party in Romania has toppled the regime of Ceausescu and his wife.

Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi explains that amongst the other elements that helped in toppling such regimes was the role of the super powers, the desire of these nations to gain liberty and the West's determination to topple the Marxist and the communist regimes "all these elements combined and led to thousands falling victim without the need for them to die."

Mauritania

Authorities Hand Over Senegalese Fishermen

AB1501140990 Paris AFP in English 1833 GMT 14 Jan 90

[Text] Nouakchott, Jan 14 (AFP)—The Mauritanian authorities on Sunday handed over to the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) 23 Senegalese fishermen whom they had been holding since last August. The fishermen, who were seized in Mauritanian waters by the Mauritanian Coast Guard, are expected to be handed over to the Senegalese authorities as soon as possible.

The two countries broke off diplomatic relations in August after the bloody ethnic conflict that erupted between the two countries earlier last year, and relations between Mauritania and Senegal remain tense.

Niger Minister Delivers Saibou Message

AB1301085090 Nouakchott Domestic Service in French 1430 GMT 12 Jan 90

[Text] Amadou Fiti Maiga, Niger minister in charge of special duties at the Presidency, left Nouakchott yesterday evening. During his visit to our capital, the Niger minister delivered to Colonel Maaouiya Ould Sid'Ahmed Taya, chairman of the Military Committee for National Redemption and head of state, a message from his brother, General Ali Saibou, Niger head of state and current chairman of the Economic Community of West African States.

1989-1990 Rice Harvest Termed 'Satisfactory'

AB1601221090 Nouakchott Domestic Service in French 1430 GMT 15 Jan 90

[Excerpt] Forty-six thousand tonnes of rice were produced during the just-ended rice production season. This satisfactory result was announced by the SONADER [National Rice Development Company]. Omar Dabali Ould Deze has the details.

[Ould Deze] Our country, which embarked upon rice production not quite 10 years ago, has continued to record significant results from year to year in the cultivation of this crop which is particularly new to our Sahel region. The result of the rice harvest for this season has been made public by the SONADER. Forty-six thousand tonnes were produced. Nobody had predicted this result. We had actually expected a poor rice harvest, but the willingness and courage of our rice farmers has changed the course of events. [passage omitted]

Cabinet Session Approves 1990 Budget Plan

AB1101102490 Nouakchott Domestic Service in French 1430 GMT 10 Jan 90

[Excerpt] The Cabinet met this morning under the chairmanship of Colonel Maaouiya Ould Sid'Ahmed Taya, chairman of the CMSN [Military Committee for National Salvation] and head of state. The CMSN held its regular session on 7-9 January 1990 under the chairmanship of Col Maaouiya Ould Sid'Ahmed Taya.

At this session, the Cabinet examined [words indistinct] and heard a message from the CMSN chairman and head of state about government activities during the period between two meetings. The activities were mainly efforts to integrate our compatriots expelled from Senegal and to find a solution to the conflict between our country and Senegal. There were also efforts to instill more ethics into Mauritanians and to create conditions conducive to the modernization of the country and its economic and financial recovery to allow progress in several fields. The CMSN noted with satisfaction the progress in various fields, especially the appreciable success of the integration of our compatriots expelled from Senegal.

The CMSN permanent secretary briefed the Cabinet on the activities of the permanent Secretariat and activities of mass education organizations during the period between the two Cabinet meetings. Furthermore, the CMSN examined and approved draft ordinance No 525 relating to the 1990 financial law on the recurrent budget and the consolidated investment budget. Receipts and expenses balance at 22.118 billion ouguiyas. This budget includes sectorial measures aimed at revitalizing all areas of the economy, which should achieve a growth rate of 3.5 percent of the Gross National Product. The current finance law is characterized by greater efficiency in tax collection and by a greater effort to progressively decrease current expenditures and increase credits for equipment and basic investment. [passage omitted]

Sudan

SPLA Reports More Victories; Yei Beseiged

EA1701222690 (Clandestine) Radio of the Sudanese People's Liberation Army in English 1300 GMT 17 Jan 90

[Text] SPLA [Sudanese People's Liberation Army] forces of the "Bright Star" campaign yesterday ambushed an enemy convoy moving from Yei to Maridi. Many vehicles were destroyed and 15 captured in good working condition. The convoy was totally destroyed.

In a related development, "Bright Star" campaign forces yesterday overran Alero Garrison, an outpost of Yei 7 miles away, capturing mortars, RPG-7, lots of ammunition and other equipment. "Bright Star" campaign forces then advanced to within three miles of Yei. The town of Yei is now besieged on all sides, and the military garrisons there will be subjected to intensive heavy artillery bombardment beginning today. [sounds of martial music]

The civilian population of Yei have all deserted the town for the countryside. Reports from Yei town reveal that patriotic officers of Yei Garrison had met and took unilateral decision to advise the population to evacuate Yei town for the countryside.

SPLA high command congratulates the patriotic officers in Yei garrison for their nationalistic stand. We advise other garrisons in Western Equatoria, including Juba to take the same stand as that of Yei Garrison, and to take the action even further by taking over their garrisons with coordination and support of the SPLA if necessary.

Realiable information has revealed that Brigadier Isaiah Paul was wounded in the left thigh which was fractured during the battle for Morobo. He was then quickly put into a woman's dress by his bodyguards who took him across the border into Zaire. The SPLA still wants Isaiah Paul alive for questioning.

The SPLA will give him medical treatment so that he answers some human rights questions. Brig Isaiah Paul had ordered the hands of a Kakwa tribe sub-chief to be cut off using a panga [machete]. He then himself is reported to have told the sub-chief that those ugly hands of yours will never hold a gun for the SPLA again. The sub-chief died two days later.

Isaiah Paul is required by the SPLA to explain these hideous and monstrous crimes. [martial music]

In a separate news development, Bishop Paride Taban, of the Torit Catholic diocese, has been elected head of the New Sudan Council of Churches, NSCC, and Bishop Nathaniel Garang, of Bor Protestant Church, elected his deputy. The formation of the NSCC and election of Bishops Taban and Garang were reported to Radio SPLA yesterday by a correspondent of radio SPLA based in Torit.

The NSCC is not meant to replace or be competitive with the Sudan Council of Churches based in Khartoum, but to serve the Christians and population in SPLA-liberated areas as these areas cannot possibly be reached by Khartoum-based Sudan Council of Churches.

Clergymen of both Catholic and Protestant churches residing in the liberated areas are here asked to report to Bishop Paride Taban in Torit for the further organization and development of the NSCC.

The official spokesman of the SPLM-SPLA [Sudanese People's Liberation Movement/Army] has welcomed the formation of the NSCC, describing it as a spiritual wing of the movement and assured the NSCC that the movement's leadership will encourage and give all the necessary assistance to the NSCC.

The spokesman of the SPLM-SPLA appealed to the Muslim community in the liberated areas to form a Muslim organization for the new Sudan, so that such an organization forms a greater spiritual organization with the NSCC for the new Sudan.

The spokesman said such a greater spiritual organization for the new Sudan is greatly needed so that tolerant and patriotic Muslims and Christians have an alternative religious organization to the divisive fundamentalist organization.

The spokesman called for the evolution and discussion of the concept of a people's mosque and a people's church which serves the real spiritual and other needs of the common people instead of the present religious-based organisation that only uses and trades with religion for the rich.

Minister Denies Military Gains by Garang Forces

PM1701115690 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 15 Jan 90 p 2

[Kamal Hamid report: "Sudanese Information Minister: Garang Movement Resorted to Rumors To Conceal Heavy Losses"]

[Excerpt] Khartoum, AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT bureau—'Ali Shummu, Sudanese information minister and the government's official spokesman, has denied the reports spread by the John Garang movement that it has achieved military victories between Juba and Yei or that it has occupied towns south of the Kordofan Province.

In an exclusive statement to AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT Shummu said that "the rebel movement is these days experiencing a state of imbalance as a result of the successive military blows that it has received over the past 2 months and the huge losses among its personnel—thousands of them. It is isolated from the innocent citizens in the south who have been exposed to robbery and looting and whose daily lives have been obstructed by the movement. For all the reasons familair to us, the movement turned to foreign media services to disseminate such media buffoonery."

The Sudanese information minister added that "the roads which the rebel movement claim are under its control are still open, and citizens in the south know it. Everyone knows that the Sudanese Armed Forces are in complete control of all military positions, are achieving new victories every day, and are performing their duty both responsibly and efficiently in defense of the homeland." [passage omitted]

Government Says Foreign Country Helped Rebels

EA1401162090 Khartoum SUNA in Arabic 1030 GMT 14 Jan 90

[Text] Khartoum, 14 Jan (SUNA)—The general command of the People's Armed Forces has stressed that war will not solve Sudan's problems, that the revolution strove from the outset for peace, but the rebel movement miscalculated and thought that the government was weak and stepped up its operations.

The command of the military zone of the Equatoria Region said in a statement yesterday that the Armed Forces had taught the outlaws lessons they would never forget in Kurmuk, Rumbek, Kaka and in the Terakeka area. Likewise the blows inflicted on them by the Air Force in scores of places had driven them to try to achieve a hollow victory.

The statement said that the rebel movement had amassed its forces from a neighboring country in an attempt to capture Kajo Kaji. The command then sent an equal force to scatter the agent and mercenary forces from around the town. The force managed to destroy the (Morto) and (Manglator) camps. The force also completely eliminated four ambushes of the enemy. There were no more than 17 miles between the force and Kajo Kaji when it was attacked from the rear by mechanized forces, artillery and aircraft belonging to the neighboring country, which was incontrovertible evidence that the neighboring country intervened in the interest of the rebels.

The statement added that the balanced force then followed an alternative axis, stressing that the Armed Forces were cohesive and determined to accomplish their task, as well as capable of striking two blows for every one blow.

Official on Mubarak's Ongoing Peace Contacts

EA1201123789 Khartoum SUNA in English 0920 GMT 12 Jan 90

[Text] Khartoum, Jan 12 (SUNA)—The Revolution Command Council member Col. Martin Malwal yesterday reaffirmed the revolution's determination to realize a lasting peace in the south Sudan and in the country in general.

In press statement Col. Malwal stressed the necessity of the ongoing peace contacts by the Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak for the sake of peace in the Sudan.

He described President Hosni Mubarak as enjoying a special respect from both the Sudanese Government and the rebel movement of John Garang in addition to his position as president of the current session of the Organization of African Unity (OAU).

Col. Malwal added that the special relations between Sudan and Egypt enables President Mubarak to lead the peace negotiations between the government and the rebel movement.

Official on Cooperation With Ethiopia on Nile

EA1201131190 Khartoum SUNA in English 1021 GMT 11 Jan 90

[Text] Khartoum, Irrigation Minister Dr. Ya'qub Abu Shura has expressed Sudan's readiness to cooperate with Ethiopia in the field of Nile waters.

In an interview with the daily "AL-SUDAN AL-HADITH" of today, Abu Shura affirmed that cooperation in this field will serve the interest of the Nile valley's people.

Regarding the building of Ethiopia to new dams on the Nile, Dr Abu Shura said that this will affect the revenues of the Nile waters to both Sudan and Egypt. [sentence as received]

He further affirmed the readiness of the two countries, Egypt and Sudan, to negotiate with Ethiopia for guarantee its needs from the Nile waters.

New Regional Governors, Officials Sworn In

EA1401200390 Omdurman Domestic Service in Arabic 1800 GMT 14 Jan 90

[Excerpt] The following persons were sworn in today before Lieutenant General 'Umar Hasan Ahmad al-Bashir, the National Salvation Revolution Command Council chairman and the prime minister, at the Secretariat General of the Council of ministers:

1. (Andrew Mayol), deputy regional governor of Bahr al-Ghazal.

2. [first name indistinct] Akot, district governor of Eastern Bahr al-Ghazal,

3. Colonel Joseph Louis, district governor of Buhayrat,

4. 'Abd-al-Rahman Jalal al-Din Karam Allah, district governor of Western Bahr al-Ghazal,

5. Police Colonel (George Nam), distirct governor of [word indistinct] in the Upper Nile Region. [passage omitted]

Preparations for Arrival of Iranian Pilgrims

JN1701121290 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1050 GMT 17 Jan 90

[Text] Baghdad, 17 Jan (INA)—Iraq has taken all necessary measures to secure and prepare border posts with Iran to receive Iranian visitors to the holy shrines and to schedule four Iraqi Airways flights daily between Baghdad and Tehran.

The weekly magazine ALIF BA' quoted Interior Minister Samir Muhammad 'Abd-al-Wahhab as saying his ministry has taken all measures to receive the Iranians who want to visit the holy shrines pursuant to President Saddam Husayn's initiative announced on 3 January. He said the ministry's organs have taken all necessary measures along the roads leading to the holy shrines to assist the Iranian visitors.

The Awqaf and Religious Affairs Ministry also has prepared special places to receive Iranian visitors and to provide them with every comfort.

In a related development, 'Abdallah Fadil, minister of Awqaf and religious affairs, has said: We have made plans for appropriate and comfortable accommodation of Iranians at hotels near the religious sites in al-Kazimiyah, Samarra', al-Najaf, and Karbala'.

In another development, the Iraqi Airways Company has made necessary technical arrangements to operate flights between Baghdad and Tehran at the rate of four a day.

Engineer Nur al-Din Safi, director general of the company, said the Iraqi aircraft, including jumbo jets, are ready to land at Tehran airport once approval is granted. He added Iraqi Airways is ready to transport 1,500 passengers daily to and from Tehran.

He added the company is ready to use company buses to transport Iranian travelers who wish to visit the holy shrines in Karbala', al-Najaf, Samarra', and al-Kazimiyah.

Meanwhile, the Foreign Ministry has prepared lists of names of Iranian prisoners of war in Latin characters to facilitate a comprehensive exchange of POW's [prisoners of war].

Akram al-Watari, head of the Legal Department at the Foreign Ministry, mentioned prisoners whose names are not registered with the International Committee of the Red Cross [ICRC]. He added that lists of these prisoners have been prepared, and the foreign minister submitted them to the ICRC in Geneva on the condition the Iranian side also submit similar lists.

He also said the lists of the names of the sick and wounded Iranian POW's were prepared, along with their medical reports, for exchange with the Iranian side.

Turkish Embassy Source on Euphrates Issue

NC1401135790 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1216 GMT 14 Jan 90

[Text] Cairo, 14 Jan (MENA)—An official Turkish Embassy source in Cairo has ruled out the possibility of a crisis in relations between Turkey and both Syria and Iraq as a result of the cut-off of Euphrates water from the latter two countries.

In a statement to MENA today commenting on newspaper reports on this issue, the source said this step is a technical matter with no political motives. He pointed out the waters of several small dams located in both Turkey and Syria will continue to flow and feed the rivers in Syria.

Regarding this, the official referred to a 1987 agreement between Turkey and Syria governing the use of the Euphrates waters. This agreement includes a Turkish pledge to continue, under all circumstances, to feed the Euphrates with no less than 500 cubic meters of water per second after the river enters Syrian territory. He pointed out 550 cubic meters per second now are being fed. He noted Syria has, however, said this amount is insufficient.

The Turkish diplomatic source affirmed Turkey would not cut off water from any neighboring country.

He added the water cut-off for filling the lake behind Ataturk Dam is an initial stage that will be followed by two other stages at times not yet determined.

The source said Syrian and Iraqi delegations visited the dam area in December to view operations. He noted Turkey also had proposed stationing observers in the area to supervise the water flow.

It is recalled the Euphrates issue affects the vital interests of the three states: Turkey, Syria, and Iraq. The river originates in Turkish territory and then passes through Syria and Iraq before flowing into the Shatt al-'Arab, covering a distance of 2,315 km, 400 of which are in Turkish territory.

The river is regarded Iraq's most vital water resource and a basic water and energy source for Syria. It irrigates two-thirds of Syrian territory.

Presidential Office Announces Travel Guidelines

JN1701214090 Baghdad Domestic Service in Arabic 1900 GMT 17 Jan 90

[Text] To implement the order issued by His Excellency President leader Saddam Husayn, may God protect him, dated 17 January 1990, allowing Iraqis to travel to all parts of the world, which was published today, the Economic Committee has drawn up the proper controls pursuant to the order as follows:

First, people seeking to travel abroad are permitted to do so without obtaining a bank transfer. The number of trips per year shall not to be fixed.

Second, $700, or its equivalent in hard currency, shall be fixed as the maximum amount to be taken abroad per year.

Third, the travel approval shall be valid for 1 month from the time of its issuance. Travelers are not permitted to convert currency or keep the approved permit after the end of the mentioned period.

Fourth, Iraqi travelers shall be allowed to pay for their tickets with Iraqi dinars only when flying Iraqi Airways; otherwise, they shall have to pay for their tickets using the Iraqi dinar supported [al-mughadhdha] by foreign currency obtained through the banking sector, whose source shall not be legally questioned.

[Signed] Ahmad Husayn, head of the Presidential Office

Oil Minister Meets Jordanian Energy Minister

JN1701143490 Baghdad INA in English 1255 GMT 17 Jan 90

[Text] Baghdad, Jan 17, INA—Mr. 'Isam 'Abd-al-Rahim, minister of oil, met here today Jordanian Minister of Energy and Mineral Resources Thabit al-Tahir who is visiting Iraq to attend meetings of the ACC [Arab Cooperation Council] Ministerial Committee.

During the meeting, bilateral relations and means of cementing them were reviewed, besides discussing results of the meetings of the ACC oil and energy ministers and preparations for holding the second meeting during the next weeks.

Trade Minister Confers With Kuwaiti Counterpart

JN1701213290 Baghdad INA in English 1750 GMT 17 Jan 90

[Text] Baghdad, Jan 17, INA—Minister of Trade Muhammad Mahdi Salih met here today Kuwaiti Minister of Trade and Industry Faysal 'Abd-al-Razzaq al-Khalid.

During the meeting bilateral ties in the economic and trade field and means of cementing them were reviewed.

Reportage on Reaction to Proposed U.S. Aid Cut

Shamir Comments in Interview

TA1801061690 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 0505 GMT 18 Jan 90

[Telephone interview with Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir by correspondent Arye Golan—live]

[Excerpt] [Golan] Good morning, Mr Prime Minister.

[Shamir] Good morning.

[Golan] Do you have any expectations from Defense Minister Rabin's meeting with U.S. Secretary of State Baker this evening, despite the defense minister's attempts to lower any such expectations?

[Shamir] Well, I do not know exactly what they are going to discuss. I believe the defense minister is familiar with the Israeli Government's positions and will operate within the framework acceptable to the government.

[Golan] Could there be any breakthrough out of the deadlock in which the Israeli peace initiative currently finds itself?

[Shamir] I do not think there is any deadlock. If there are any difficulties and obstacles, they mainly stem from the extremist positions of the Arab side. The Israeli Government has explicitly declared—first of all, in its peace initiative—that we will not negotiate with the PLO, the peace initiative is not directed at the PLO, and we desire to negotiate with Palestinian circles. If the Arab side acts accordingly and the U.S. mediator also acts in accordance with the parties' positions and with what is written, stipulated, and accepted in the peace initiative, then I see no particular difficulty in furthering the peace initiative, which actually is an Israeli plan. We originated it and suggested it, and we stand firm on every word and detail appearing in our initiative.

[Golan] Egypt definitely is a key state in these negotiations, and Vice Prime Minister Shim'on Peres will leave for Egypt next Tuesday [23 January]. Could anything budge as a result of this visit?

[Shamir] Listen, we really were happy to receive Egyptian assistance in our efforts to implement peace in the Middle East. Egypt also has a clear interest in not remaining the only Arab country with a peace agreement with Israel. For whatever reasons, however, Egypt recently has preferred to support all the PLO positions which are not, as is known, the same as our positions. Now, as for Vice Premier Peres' trip to Egypt, I do not know if he can change Mubarak's position, but at least Mr Peres knows exactly the framework in which one can pursue the peace initiative and achieve serious progress.

[Golan] Mr Prime Minister, we have heard suggestions from Washington calling for cuts in Israel's foreign aid. The idea was proposed by Senator Dole, but we have been informed the White House and the State Department both support this proposal. Are you concerned by the proposal to reduce aid?

[Shamir] Certainly, this proposal is very worrisome and bodes ill for Israel at a time when we need even greater support from our friends. Israel currently is in the midst of a tremendous human endeavor: the absorption and rehabilitation of Jews coming from the same Eastern Europe the person who made this proposal is so worried about, and it would be very sad and very harmful if U.S. aid to Israel was reduced rather than increased. I hope the administration and Congress will reject these proposals.

[Golan] Perhaps it is a tiny hint you should change your positions on the composition of the Palestinian delegation and the inclusion of deportees or Arabs from East Jerusalem?

[Shamir] I do not feel this was the intention. This is not the first time this suggestion has been made in the United States by the same people. The United States is fully aware of Israel's point of view and those positions that cannot be changed, and I do not see any connection or any possible future linkage of the peace process and the close and friendly relations between Israel and the United States.

[Golan] Mr Shamir, regarding that tremendous mission you were talking about a minute ago: immigrants from the Soviet Union. This week you made a statement which caused a negative reaction in Washington. The State Department spokeswoman said tonight the statement you made on big immigration requiring a big Israel was not helpful. Senator Moynihan, who is visiting Israel and whom you will meet with tonight, said he was shocked by what you said. There are reports the Arabs are using your remarks to pressure the Soviets to stop sending Jews to Israel. Do you regret making these statements?

[Shamir] Well, first of all, the Arabs oppose all immigration, and this has nothing to do with anything I do or do not say. For them, immigration is a disaster. The immigration of Jews to Israel in large numbers is a sign of defeat for them, a defeat in their war against the State of Israel and against Zionism...

[Golan, interrupting] Could they not use these statements as weapons in their war against us?

[Shamir] No, no. We have not given them any weapons. They are fighting and working against this immigration. As for the Americans, I consider their reaction excessive. I will meet with Senator Moynihan today, and I think I will be able to show him our statements and positions were misjudged and misunderstood. After all, everyone is familiar with my personal opinions and the Likud's positions regarding the future of the State of Israel, and we never hid our belief the permanent peace agreement between Israel and the Arab world which, God willing,

will be reached one day, should not include any territorial clause calling for a new division of Eretz Yisra'el. The country is very small, and any new division would not help solve any problems but only create new ones. We do not believe in such solutions, but we nevertheless have great belief in the chances and possibilities of the peace which must come and which we will do our utmost to achieve.

Peres Says 'No Justification'

TA1701181090 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1705 GMT 17 Jan 90

[Report by Menahem Friedman]

[Text] Finance Minister Shim'on Peres says Senator Dole's call for cuts in aid to Israel should be taken seriously, and yes, indeed we are worried. As for the threat itself, Minister Peres says: The $3 billion in U.S. aid should be divided in two: the economic aid to the tune of $1.2 billion, earmarked for repayment of debt plus interest to the United States, and the $1.8 billion in defense aid.

[Begin Peres recording] Congress decided economic aid to Israel never should fall below the annual sum of money Israel must repay to the United States. In fact, we use that money to repay all our debts to the United States.

As for security assistance, evidently this year the U.S. inflation rate will reach close to 5 percent. This means an erosion of 5 percent in purchasing power. In addition to this, weapon prices have rocketed. It is not a static situation. It is not as though the Soviet Union has begun to disarm, because whatever the USSR may do in the Middle East, Iraq takes pain to reverse. It has procured and is manufacturing more sophisticated and expensive weapons, which are more frightening and worrying as a result. From the point of view of Israel's efforts, too—and by that I refer to the 22 percent or so of Israel's annual budget slated for security—compared with the efforts exerted in Europe, there is no justification to single us out instead of balancing it somewhat with the Europeans, who are having an easier time now from the strategic point of view. [end recording]

The U.S. Government, says Peres, has pledged not to affect Israel's defensive capability. A strong IDF [Israel Defense Forces] is one of the necessary conditions for the peace process.

Iraqi Threat Considered

TA1701182690 Jerusalem Television Service in Arabic 1730 GMT 17 Jan 90

["Excerpt" of address by Shim'on Peres, vice prime minister and finance minister, at the Jerusalem Economic and Social Club on 17 January—recorded in Hebrew with Arabic subtitles]

[Text] I was surprised by the remarks of Senator Dole, who should not necessarily be regarded an enemy of Israel. Let me say a few words regarding the aid: We receive $3 billion in U.S. aid per annum. Part of it is economic aid, another part is defense assistance. We get $1.2 billion in economic aid, and $1.8 billion in defense assistance. The entire sum of $1.2 billion actually stays in the United States, as it is used to repay debts and interest. We have a historic $10.5 billion debt to the United States. We accrued that debt from the wars, but also as a result of peace. For example, we are still paying for the relocation of the airfields, which were moved from the Sinai to the Negev.

I cannot ignore the fact there is at least one Arab country building up a highly threatening military force—a country which in fact started out with a large military force, even though it never won a war. That country is Iraq. Iraq has established approximately 50 divisions [not further specified], which is a huge force, even in European terms. It also built a very large air force. It now produces long-range missiles with nonconventional warheads to obtain hegemony in the Arab world and to threaten several countries in the region. In the end, perhaps nothing will come of it, but Israel cannot afford, even for a moment, to ignore this threat. This is one of the reasons why I, as finance minister, did not suggest slashing the defense budget this year. I had this threat in mind, and I still see it very clearly.

Shomron Notes Soviets in Syria

TA1701174190 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1700 GMT 17 Jan 90

[Text] Lieutenant General Dan Shomron, chief of staff, says a strong Israel is in the United States' interest. He consequently hopes Washington will not slash defense and economic aid to Israel. The intention to cut back aid is connected to the new phase in superpower relations, but in the Middle East, nothing has changed.

In this context, the chief of staff reported Soviet advisers still are in Syria, and even if the Soviets are seeking ways to reduce their expenditure, there's been no noticeable departure of Soviet advisers from Syria. The supply of Soviet weapons to Syria continues, with no visible reduction. The chief of staff was speaking today at the end of a cadet exercise in the Negev.

Arens Rejects Dole's Proposal

TA1801075290 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 0505 GMT 18 Jan 90

[Text] Foreign Minister Moshe Arens said that in his last telephone conversation with U.S. Secretary of State James Baker 2 days ago, it transpired the tripartite meeting of foreign ministers will be conducted at the end of February. Arens also reacted to Senator Dole's proposal to cut aid to Israel. Gid'on Kouts spoke with him in Portugal:

[Begin recording] [Arens] Mr Baker called to inform me of his scheduled meeting with Egyptian Foreign Minister 'Abd-al-Majid. He briefed me on his travel plans. We spoke about the tripartite meeting, which only can take place after 17 February, as this is the date he returns to Washington following his various trips. I indeed hope the meeting takes place toward the end of February.

[Kouts] Were any new proposals or assurances discussed?

[Arens] No, we did not conduct negotiations over the phone.

[Kouts] What do you think of Senator Dole's proposal to cut back on aid to Israel?

[Arens] We are following Eastern European developments with much sympathy. We certainly endorse support for these countries during their complex transition from communist regimes to democracies, but I fear U.S. interests would not best be served if the U.S. financial aid to these countries comes at Israel's expense, and it certainly would be detrimental to Israel's interest, because it will weaken us and lead to instability in the Middle East, which certainly does not match U.S. interests.

[Kouts] Regarding Eastern Europe, are you happy with Shim'on Peres' trip to the CSSR?

[Arens] Look, Minister Peres is the vice prime minister, and if he has decided to go, he will go. [end recording]

[Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew at 0600 GMT on 18 January adds "Foreign Minister Moshe Arens said the renewal of diplomatic relations between Israel and the CSSR very soon is expected. He added he expects all other Eastern European countries, with the exception of Albania, to renew relations with Israel within a few months."]

Cutbacks 'Harm' Strategic Plans

TA1801100090 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 0600 GMT 18 Jan 90

[Text] Sources in the defense establishment have said the proposed cutbacks in aid to Israel suggested by Senator Dole would seriously harm Israeli purchases in the United States and the two countries' joint strategic plans, and lead to the dismissal of hundreds of employees from Israeli defense industries.

The sources pointed out the Soviet Union is continuing to supply arms to Iraq, Syria, and Libya. They expect Moscow to step up arms sales in the near future to inject money into its dwindling coffers.

Arens Denies Baker Against Better Assurances Bid

TA1701195690 Jerusalem Television Service in Hebrew 1900 GMT 17 Jan 90

[Text] Our political correspondent Yig'al Goren has learned that, in the telephone conversation between Secretary Baker and Minister Arens, the former also said he does not accept Israel haggling with the United States over the assurances. Authoritative political sources in Washington have reported James Baker said this is a waste of time, and if a meeting of foreign ministers in February is desired, it is necessary to make progress rather than get bogged down by the assurances business. Secretary Baker told his Israeli counterpart no tripartite meeting involving himself, Minister Rabin, and the Egyptian foreign minister is planned.

Deputy Foreign Minister Binyamin Netanyahu says he contacted the foreign minister's party in Portugal tonight and was told Minister Arens denies reports Secretary Baker asked Israel to forgo its attempt to obtain better assurances.

Baker Denies Accusation of 'Halting' Process

TA1701134490 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1300 GMT 17 Jan 90

[Text] Deputy Foreign Minister Binyamin Netanyahu told the Knesset Plenum today that U.S. Secretary of State James Baker believes the Israeli, Egyptian, and U.S. foreign ministers will conduct a meeting in Washington by the end of February.

Speaking on the phone to Foreign Minister Moshe Arens, Baker said the United States is not disengaging itself from the peace process, nor does he accuse Israel of halting the process.

Netanyahu further reported that, after Israel had notified the United States the draft of assurances Washington presented was insufficient, the Americans asked for an Israeli draft. According to Netanyahu, this document soon will be presented to the United States.

Ze'ev Kohen, our correspondent in the Knesset, reports in the debate that preceded Netanyahu's address, Knesset Member [MK] Yosi Sarid declared his faction, the CRM [Citizens Rights Movement], would agree to join a narrow-based government with the Alignment only if Israel talks to the PLO.

Likud MK Binyamin Begin criticized the Labor Party, saying it is leading to a Palestinian state under a PLO regime.

MK Hayim Ramon [Head of the Alignment Knesset faction] on the other hand accused the prime minister and the foreign minister of knowingly preventing the peace initiative from being implemented.

Netanyahu on U.S. Negotiations, Assurances

TA1701164390 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1500 GMT 17 Jan 90

[Telephone interview with Deputy Foreign Minister Binyamin Netanyahu by Dan Shilon and Goni Mardor—live]

[Text] [Shilon] Good evening, Deputy Foreign Minister Netanyahu.

[Netanyahu] Good evening.

[Shilon] You briefed the Knesset today about a telephone conversation the U.S. and our foreign ministers conducted yesterday. You also mentioned the relations between Israel and the United States are of the business-as-usual variety, as the English saying goes. At the very same time, however, your fellow party member Beni Begin says things between us are not good, referring to the rifts between us and the United States. How do you reconcile both remarks?

[Netanyahu] I believe what should be understood is we are in a process of negotiations, a normal process of discussions. We received the U.S. proposal of assurances. They were the ones to realize our peace initiative, with all of its chances, also contains risks. In a letter from James Baker to Minister Arens, they proposed a series of assurances we should agree on. So, we are talking. We have not yet reached an agreement, and we certainly are protecting our own interests.

[Shilon] Several days ago, these remarks were termed by Baker as nit-picking on the part of Israel.

[Netanyahu] Yes, I heard various remarks attributed to James Baker. Luckily, we are not conducting diplomacy through the press. We are doing it through direct contact, if not eye to eye, at least ear to mouth, as in this case.

[Shilon] In these direct contacts, do you not detect this coolness, this criticism noted by the press?

[Netanyahu] I believe every side gets frustrated every now and then. We are frustrated, too. To get to the point: This is a normal process of discussion. We should bear in mind there is no need to accept every proposal with which we are being presented. After all, we are taking the risks. We need the assurances. This is our country, and we should guard it.

[Mardor] Mr Netanyahu, the question is whether anything was done in the 3 days that passed since Baker made his remarks on the nit-picking demands, on a U.S. withdrawal from the peace process. What had happened in these 3 days that encouraged Baker to talk already about a possible tripartite meeting in February, and say he no longer is angry with Israel?

[Netanyahu] You feed on various reports in the media. The contacts continue. I believe the process could advance very fast, if our basic security demands are met and agreed to.

[Shilon] Do you think the prime minister and the foreign minister felt relieved when they heard the reports James Baker might withdraw from the political process?

[Netanyahu] I do not think anyone was relieved. I also do not think this is what he meant. He unequivocally made clear in his conversation with Arens last night the United States is not withdrawing, rather it goes on with the peace process. In general, I believe we should relax and not panic when some obstacle occurs, or we meet difficulties in the negotiations. Negotiations are a process. We maintain a reasonable pace, with great responsibility, while maintaining our vital interests. At the same time, I believe U.S. officials understand this. They know we are not engaged in some vague negotiations, but are talking about things that touch upon the very core of our existence. Rushing here will do no good; responsibility will.

[Shilon] Shim'on Peres is going to Egypt. A short while ago, we all heard him say he is not a clerk of Moshe Arens. Are Peres' meetings in Egypt coordinated with the Foreign Ministry?

[Netanyahu] We have heard nothing about it. We learned about it through a notice from the Prime Minister's Office. The standing procedure is when a minister wishes to conduct contacts in a foreign country, he should call and coordinate matters with the Foreign Ministry. This always has been done this way. I only can regret the fact it did not happen this way here.

[Mardor] Mr Netanyahu, about the U.S. aid. We heard remarks made by Senator Dole concerning a possible cut in foreign aid. Shim'on Peres says it should be taken seriously. As someone who is familiar with the U.S. Administration, do you believe we really should be worried by the possible cut? Is it a serious threat?

[Netanyahu] I do not think there is a threat to aid in the next 2 or 3 years. The aid is solid, the support for Israel is firm. We should understand what Senator Dole was talking about is the changes in Eastern Europe are creating difficulties not only for U.S. foreign aid in general, but also aid for Israel, meaning the expected enormous wave of immigration to Israel from Eastern Europe and from the USSR in particular. So, if we take both sides of the equation, including our defense needs, I believe many—a substantive majority in Congress—understand this. I wish to add, however, that—perhaps not in the near future, but certainly in the long run, meaning the next decade—I am not at all sure U.S. aid will be maintained at its current level. Therefore, we should be prepared accordingly, both economically and politically.

[Shilon] Binyamin Netanyahu, you are not only a deputy foreign minister, but also a political figure and a member of the Likud Central Committee. Yesterday, you met with Minister Ari'el Sharon. Are we witnessing a political alliance between you?

[Netanyahu] As you well know, we met in Minister Sharon's office. Minister Sharon invited me for a discussion, and I accepted. Naturally, we discussed the various issues on today's agenda.

[Shilon] Were you on the same wavelength?

[Netanyahu] There are certain things to which we can agree; not everything, I can tell you this right now. The main thing I tried to make clear to Minister Sharon is that, in my opinion, our main struggle at the moment is for a single front to face the various obstacles. There are attempts by the PLO and others to torpedo our peace initiative, to weaken our position. The way I see it, our uniting in a single front—incidentally not only in the party but also at the inter-party level—is a current need. We cannot conduct negotiations when the ones engaged in them do not get the necessary backing. This backing should granted to the prime minister.

[Shilon] Binyamin Netanyahu, thank you very much.

Arabs Pressure USSR To Halt Jewish Immigration

TA1801095590 Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT in Hebrew 18 Jan 90 pp 1, 12

[Report from New York by Tzadoq Yehezqeli, from Washington by Rami Tal, and by Gad Li'or]

[Text] The Soviet Union may stem the flow of Jewish immigration to Israel if Israel settles the immigrants in the territories. This was reported last night to the Foreign Ministry in Jerusalem by a senior official on the Israeli UN delegation in New York.

The report, dispatched to the Foreign Ministry by that senior diplomat, indicates the threat to Israel was delivered during an unscheduled encounter between the Israeli diplomat and the USSR's UN ambassador during a dinner.

The ambassador disclosed that recently, the Arab countries have pressured the Soviet Union heavily to close the gates on mass Jewish immigration to Israel. "So far, the USSR has been able to stand up to that pressure," the senior Soviet official told his Israeli counterpart, "but settling some of the immigrants in the territories will make it extremely difficult for the USSR to withstand the Arab countries' pressure and may force it to stop immigration to Israel."

Israeli diplomatic sources believe this was not a casual remark, but rather an intended message, a signal the USSR made sure reached Israeli ears.

The remark was not made without cause. Only yesterday, Construction and Housing Minister David Levi said in New York, after meeting with U.S. contractors, "we have no problem with the territories and already have started construction work there. Building projects for new immigrants will begin in Judaea and Samaria, just as in the Galilee and the Negev."

A high-ranking economic delegation will arrive from the Soviet Union next week to complete preparations for Vice Prime Minister Shim'on Peres' upcoming visit.

In a cable that arrived last night in Peres' office, the Soviets officially informed him he is invited to the Soviet Union in a few weeks for a visit. Peres' USSR tour already has been postponed twice.

The delegation expected here includes very senior officials, and its composition proves the Soviet authorities wish to reach an immediate arrangement for opening Aeroflot and El Al air routes between Moscow and Tel Aviv.

The following are the personalities in the Soviet delegation: the deputy chairman of the State Planning Committee; the director general of Aeroflot's Middle East and African affairs branch; a representative for the Ministry of Civil Aviation; the head of the State Committee for Foreign Tourism; the deputy chairman for foreign relations administration in the State Agroindustrial Committee; and the person heading the Middle East branch of the Soviet Peace Committee, which is organizing Peres' Moscow tour.

The Soviet delegation will be the guest of Peres and the interministerial committee preparing Peres' Moscow visit, which is headed by Dr Yosi Beilin, deputy finance minister.

The Soviets made it clear they would be happy to have assistance from the Israeli representation in Moscow in arranging the trip. The issue thus has been coordinated with the Israeli representative, Arye Levin, as well as with the Prime Minister's Office, the Foreign Ministry, and the Finance Ministry.

Commentator Urges Rethinking of USSR Policy

TA1701200490 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 17 Jan 90 p B1

[Commentary by Dan Margalit: "We Should Rush Toward Russia"]

[Text] One more sorry statement by a Cabinet minister was added to the already long list when Moshe Arens said this week "we should not run after the Soviet Union." He believes "its influence in the Middle East is waning." These remarks hark back to the era of the cold war and the times of dual polarity between the superpowers—the times during which the foreign minister's world view was shaped.

He made it sound like the wounded tiger has become a pussy cat, as if a tiger in agonizing pain cannot strike someone who steps on its tail. It will be a while before the Soviet Union ceases to be a threat to Israel, just like in the old joke that says by the time the fat man loses weight, the skinny one long will be dead.

This brief statement by the foreign minister envelops a host of faux pas. This is almost the only sure thing in the

age of absolute uncertainty that currently characterizes the turmoil and changes in Mikhail Gorbachev's country. Why not run after the Soviets? Why, as Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir demanded, be circumspect in accepting respectable invitations from the regime of glasnost and perestroika?

Before Shamir and Arens utter these assessments, the Cabinet must review the possible scenarios. What is to become of this regime, which is struggling to shed off Stalinist tradition and is battling with ethnic unrest?

One possibility is perestroika will prevail. "The voices of glasnost" that emanate from the mouths of Aleksandr Yakovlev, Yuriy Afanasyev, and Yevgeniy Yevtushenko will triumph over the yearning for Stalinist authoritarianism and the deep-seated demand for national sovereignty for the republics. This bodes ill for those who long for the Middle East status quo to remain unaffected, but it is good for peace seekers.

If perestroyka survives and continues, it will establish Moscow's place in the line of countries that march steadily and in a step-by-step manner toward the democratization of government institutions and toward regimes respectful of public opinion. A Soviet Union like the one slowly evolving will be receptive to external ideas and to the influence of individuals from the outside. It is precisely at its weakest point that the USSR will be caught in a double stranglehold: On the one hand, it will feel indebted to the United States for taking pains to involve it, to some extent, in the Middle East political process; whereas on the other hand its presence could signal to Syria and the Palestinians that the solution must be political, it must be based on negotiations, and that this entails a certain concession on their part.

One cannot accept the logical contradiction between Israel's view, which in the distant past held that the Soviets should have no role in the political process because of their intransigence and refusal to maintain a dialogue with Jerusalem; and its current negation of Soviet involvement because of exactly the opposite reasons. This is wrong! We should rush toward such a USSR!

Such a Soviet Union, open-minded as it will be to Western moods, will heed many voices: those of its traditional allies, the extremists in the Arab world; and those emanating from the anti-Semitic Pamyat organization. These two will whisper in the Soviet Union's ear that if it does not want to supply Syria with the means for war, at least it can deprive Israel of a potential advantage in the form of mass Jewish immigration. The Israeli representation in the heart of Moscow could serve as a useful tool to provide the answer to that.

Admittedly, a full democratic regime has not yet been instituted there. There only is the oligarchic democracy of the Communist Party. Yet the first lobbies already are taking shape in this democracy-in-the-making. The first buds of a lobby, for all practical purposes, already can be discerned in the Kremlin. There also will be an Arab, Islamic, and anti-Semitic lobby. These should be countered by an Israeli lobby consisting of guests and visitors, possibly also an ambassador and other diplomats. One can level all the criticism in the world against 'Ezer Weizman, but it will be impossible to ignore the fact he made a pretty blunt remark when he told the Soviets that, whatever their opinion of Yitzhaq Shamir, they will have to renew full diplomatic relations with his government.

Such talk always will crop up in any meeting, at whatever level. In every meeting it would be advisable to hear the Israeli angle as well. Under these conditions, the prime minister's call for a rejection of as many invitations for talks with the Soviets as possible is unjustified.

There is, of course, also the other option, and it will be a sad one: that Gorbachev will be ousted and perestroyka will be halted, turning the process backward by a number of years. Although the USSR did not revert to Stalinism, even after Nikita Khrushchev, it did sink into the regression of Leonid Brezhnev. This mistake could be repeated in the form of a semi-withdrawal from Gorbachev to Brezhnev-stage two.

But the current phase in Israeli-Soviet relations, despite the historical difficulties, can be characterized as a germinal, hesitant spring. It should be taken advantage of to prepare for a rainy day. A speedy move toward diplomatic recognition and an official resumption of relations will be good for Israel, even if glasnost is reversed and everything Gorbachev represents is overturned. He may be overthrown, but relations will not be severed just like that once again.

This is almost self-evident. It will be beneficial for Israel and the Jews who remain in the Soviet Union. But the Israeli politicians have not yet discarded the old world imagery. They expended more energy this year in torpedoing the travels of 'Ezer Weizman and Shim'on Peres than they devoted to setting accelerated target dates for an improvement of relations with the changing world behind the Kremlin walls.

IDF Demands Threaten Voice of America Project

TA1801113490 Tel Aviv HADASHOT in Hebrew 18 Jan 90 p 2

[Report by Shmu'el Tal]

[Text] The Voice of America radio station project in the 'Arava is in danger of being canceled after the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] made its agreement to the station's construction conditional on receiving an alternative training area for the Israel Air Force [IAF] to replace the area its planes will no longer be able to use once the station is set up. It seems the chances of finding such an alternative site are extremely slim.

The project's management was notified of the IDF's stand on the subject at the beginning of this week. The message said an alternative training site is a sine qua non

from the IDF's point of view. Senior military sources reported this position is shared by the deputy chief of staff, the head of the IDF planning branch in the general staff, and the IAF commander. The sources said "the Voice of America station only will cause us troubles, and the loss of the Air Force training ground is not the biggest of them."

The National Council on Planning and Construction is due to convene in Jerusalem at the beginning of the week to reach a final decision on the matter.

Al-Husayni Receiving Ramallah ID for Delegation

TA1801090090 Tel Aviv 'AL HAMISHMAR in Hebrew 18 Jan 90 p 1

[Report by Pinhas 'Inbari]

[Text] Faysal al-Husayni of East Jerusalem will receive a Ramallah identity card in preparation for formation of a delegation from the territories to the Cairo dialogue. This was reported to our correspondent by a diplomatic source well versed in the political process. He claimed the PLO accepts this arrangement.

No reaction was available yesterday from Al-Husayni, as the telephone line in his house was out of order. He previously had said he would appear as a Jerusalemite.

The man who probably will represent the deportees is Akram Haniyah, whom the Americans regard as a journalist and poet, not a terrorist. The source expressed his belief the issue of allowing deportees to return also will come up during Rabin's visit to Washington.

Hamas Denies Leaflet Authorship; Arrests Made

TA1801112290 Jerualem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 18 Jan 90 p 10

[Report by Ben Lynfield and ITIM]

[Excerpts] Yesterday, stores, schools and transportation in the West Bank were closed because of a general strike called by the Unified National Leadership of the Uprising to protest against American support for Israel. Arab bus companies in East Jerusalem joined the strike, despite a Transport Ministry warning last month that their licences may be revoked if they participate in strikes.

The army arrested at least 31 Palestinians Tuesday night and yesterday during sweeps in the Tulkarm and Nablus areas, Palestinian sources reported. Those arrested in Nabulus were all over age 30, according to the sources, and included 'Abd-al-Fatah al-Qasim, chairman of the political science department at Al-Najah University, and Muhammad Sawalihah, an English professor, both of whom have been jailed previously.

In 'Awarta, south of Nabulus, 21-year-old Qasim 'Awad was injured in the head by a stone thrown by a soldier, Palestinian sources said. Military sources said that 'Awad was wounded by a rubber bullet, not a stone, and was himself throwing stones at troops during the incident.

In Kafr al-Dik, near Nabulus, soldiers wounded 18-year-old Iyad Ahmad in the abdomen and buttocks during an incident, Palestinian sources reported.

In Tulkarm refugee camp, the army lifted a curfew that had been in force since Saturday, but reimposed it after stone-throwing broke out, Palestinian sources reported. A curfew was also clamped on Jamma'in, near Tulkarm, army sources said. [passage omitted]

ITIM adds:

A general strike yesterday virtually paralysed the Gaza Strip, with workers staying home and shops remaining closed. The strike had been called to protest U.S. support for Israel, Palestinian sources said.

A leaflet attacking PLO leader Yasir 'Arafat, available on Gaza streets, appeared to have been written by Hamas [Resistance Movement] Islamic fundamentalists, but was declared a fraud by Hamas supporters. The leaflet accused 'Arafat of neglecting Palestinian people's interests. [Tel Aviv HADASHOT in Hebrew on 18 January, in a report by Mikhal Qedem and Oren Kohen on page 6, adds "the sharp attack" in the leaflet "has shocked various PLO and Hamas leaders. Arab sources expressed their belief that this was not an original Hamas leaflet. Hamas supporters in the Gaza Strip have said that they are not aware of such a leaflet and that this is an Israeli plot aimed at pitting Hamas against the PLO."]

Security forces in Gaza on Tuesday night destroyed a house belonging to a member of the "Eagles of the Revolution," a group apparently associated with 'Arafat's Fatah.

The suspect was accused of killing a municipal worker and of attacking several other Gazans he claimed had cooperated with Israel.

The "Eagles of the Revolution" were uncovered by security forces three weeks ago. Its members were suspected of killing many alleged "collaborators" under cover of the organization, even though 'Arafat has condemned such killings.

The Eagles were reportedly recruited by a former prisoner freed in the 1985 Jibril prisoner exchange.

Peres 'Most Welcome' To Conduct Talks in Cairo

TA1801062090 Jerusalem Domestic Service in English 0500 GMT 18 Jan 90

[Text] Officials in the finance minister's office have expressed surprise at criticism from the Prime Minister's Office over Shim'on Peres' planned visits to Cairo and Prague next week. The officials said the prime minister did not express any criticism of the visit when he met with the finance minister.

An earlier report said that the prime minister was not enthusiastic about Peres' upcoming visits to Egypt and Czechoslovakia.

On the visit, reporter Le'a Zinder spoke with Egypt's ambassador to Israel, Muhammad Basyuni, and asked him whether Peres had been invited because his position was closer to Cairo's than that of the Likud:

[Begin recording] [Basyuni] Absolutely not, because we are dealing with the Israeli Government as is. So, we are dealing with the two main parties: Likud and the Alignment. But Mr Peres was invited to Cairo by the Jewish community, and it is normal, during his visit to Cairo, he is most welcome, and he can have talks with all the Egyptian leadership there.

[Zinder] You know, of course, that Mr Arens said that it was necessary for Egypt to stop acting as the postman for the PLO, and that this is a necessary precondition for the process to move forward. Do you think Egypt is now willing to change its role?

[Basyuni] We can't replace the Palestinian people. We are mediators.

[Zinder] But in your view, the PLO is the representative of the Palestinian people, and therefore it is your view that you will continue to represent the PLO in your dealings with Israel.

[Basyuni] Look, it is a Palestinian problem, and it is impossible to solve it without the only representative of the Palestinian people: PLO. So let us be logic and let us start to talk with PLO, because how can we solve a Palestinian problem without the only representative of the Palestinian people? [end recording]

King Husayn on Israeli Plans, Peace Process

JN1801094290 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic
18 Jan 90 p 10

[Interview with King Husayn by AL-RA'Y and JORDAN TIMES correspondent Lamis Andoni in Amman; date not given]

[Text] Question: In a press interview last week, Your Majesty pointed out the PLO cannot make further concessions. The question now is, in light of the current stalemate in the peace process, what is the way out in your opinion?

Answer: All the previous stage's developments and the PLO's stands in Algiers and Geneva so far should be added to its big credit, which is based on the Palestinian right on the soil of the Palestinian homeland, and on the PLO's objective and responsible views, especially after it has assumed its responsibilities. We had the honor to contribute to this through deciding to disengage legal and administrative ties, which produced this natural atmosphere of cooperation and trust between us. The PLO has given all it can.

At a certain stage, the discussion focused on the international conference under the auspices of the UN Security Council five permanent member states and the UN secretary general and the participation of the PLO as a major partner along with the other parties concerned, including Israel, to implement UN Security Council Resolution No 242—in other words, to implement the principle of land for peace based on the UN Charter stipulating nonacquisition of land by force, and then implement UN Security Council Resolution No 38 to secure the legitimate Palestinian rights on the soil of the Palestinian homeland. Some time has passed, during which discussion was, and I believe, still continues to bridge the gap between the official Israeli stand and the Palestinian stand. It seems Israel is intransigent, however. I would like to refer here to the Israeli prime minister's statements on Israel's need for the occupied territories to settle the new immigrant arrivals, and then to the unreasonable and unacceptable Israeli insistence on having the right to choose the Palestinian side's representatives. We do not know any other address than that of the PLO and its leadership. As I said, we believe the PLO's stand at the Palestine National Council in Geneva until now should be added to its big credit, which is based on the Palestinian national rights. The PLO did not lose anything. It is unreasonable, however, to ask it to give more than it already has. Regarding the current situation and what is taking place, the situation necessitates support for the PLO. We should support the PLO and carry out our duties collectively in the Arab homeland to restore matters to normal and insist on the PLO's participation, especially since it is the major party to achieving rights and realizing a just and durable peace.

Question: But how can the Arab countries effectively support the PLO, and in Your Majesty's opinion, can the PLO itself take a specific step?

Answer: The PLO cannot give more than it has. It remains, however, the only party to decide on this, and I am sure it is aware of its responsibilities. I totally support the PLO's stand and the stand of Mr 'Arafat and what the PLO views as proper at this stage. In the past, the PLO had plans no one knew about, or were not comprehensible. But now, these plans are better known. What Israel is planning is contained in recent statements by its prime minister regarding the occupied territories. I warn of the serious danger of which all in the Arab world should be aware. Who will the hundreds of thousands of Jewish immigrants expected to arrive in Israel replace, and what will happen to those they replace? As for the story Jordan is the solution, it is a well known one. Of course, we in the Arab World must closely watch what is taking place and prepare to confront this situation. This not only is a threat to Jordan; it threatens the depth of the Arab homeland and the Palestinian people's rights. Any Arab move, therefore, should measure up to the magnitude of the challenge and the problem.

Question: Does Your Majesty have specific ideas in mind to confront this threat? Do you believe Israel, after the stage of threats, now has moved to the stage of action with respect to the slogan Jordan is the solution?

Answer: Yes. This is embodied in the daily Israeli practices against our relatives in the occupied territories. These practices are part of this objective.

Question: What about the expulsion operations and the Israeli authorities sending back citizens at the bridges, although they carry all the necessary documents? Does this not serve the same objective?

Answer: Yes, Israel has started to implement its scheme and these measures serve those schemes.

Question: Does Your Majesty expect any positive results from the tripartite meeting among Egypt, Israel, and the United States in Washington, or are there fears it may have a negative impact or results on the region, specifically on Jordan?

Answer: God willing, we hope it only will bring good things. I am confident and reassured the brothers in Egypt, out of their sense of responsibility, have coordinated with the brothers in the PLO to undertake what they can to serve Palestinian rights on Palestinian soil. I, personally, am not in the full picture of what is taking place.

Question: Was there not Egyptian-Palestinian-Jordanian coordination prior to the departure of Egyptian Foreign Minister Dr 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid to Washington?

Answer: No.

Question: It seems there is a qualitative development in relations between Jordan and the PLO. Will this be

translated into joint practical coordination to confront the common danger; the Israeli insistence Jordan is the solution?

Answer: I discussed this with Palestinian president Yasir 'Arafat when we met here the last time, and I had referred to the subject during our meetings in Baghdad and Sanaa. Following our decision on the disengagement, we thank God a new atmosphere of trust prevails in our relations. We are in full agreement comprehensive coordination must exist between us.

Question: Have you reached agreement with 'Arafat on tangible steps?

Answer: Yes, we discussed this.

Question: Can you disclose to us the nature of these steps, if possible?

Answer: Not now.

Question: Proposals are made from time to time, including U.S. proposals, calling for readoption of the formula of the joint Palestinian-Jordanian delegation to solve what some U.S. politicians term the obstacle of the Palestinian representation?

Answer: This has not been suggested to us. We absolutely refuse to be part of this formula, unless the PLO asks us to and in a way that will help attain just and lasting peace and will safeguard the Palestinian people's legitimate national rights on their national soil.

Question: But what does Your Majesty think about the saying Palestinian representation is an obstacle to peace?

Answer: Developments are taking place on all levels. There is no doubt what has taken place and is happening worldwide is very big. Who could have guessed such dramatic changes would take place in such a short period of time? That's why the world's attention has been focused on that part. But I believe we in this region are passing through a very, very critical period. On the other hand, this region and its unresolved issues inevitably will get the attention they deserve at this stage. We must be alert to all eventualities, close ranks, and interact, beginning on the Jordanian-Palestinian level and then on the Arab level. I intend to conduct intensive contacts when the opportunity presents itself in the next stage.

Question: Is Your Majesty preparing to carry out a specific Arab move?

Answer: I believe we, as leaders of the Arab World, must reconsider everything.

Question: Does this require the convocation of an Arab summit?

Answer: This might require conducting an Arab summit. We should start, however, by conducting contacts and discussing these issues among the Arab leaders.

Question: How do you assess the democratic experience in Jordan?

Answer: I feel satisfaction and am confident the success we insist on attaining will be realized in terms of the collective participation of all the sons of the homeland so they may assume their responsibilities under the canopy of democracy to attain and safeguard its objectives.

Question: You always speak about the importance of a national charter to reorganize political life in Jordan. The features of this charter, I insist, remain unclear. Is the objective to allow establishment of new parties, or to give legitimacy to the formation of parties, including the ideological parties that exist now in the Jordanian arena?

Answer: It is the same objective I had in mind in the fifties when we felt circumstances became ripe after the Arabization of the Army and the abrogation of the Jordanian-British Treaty. We suffered setbacks at that time. We are determined to make it a success this time. This is why we need the charter, which I personally proposed. I also proposed conducting the free elections our country has witnessed, praise be to God. So, the charter will be the outcome of dialogue and ideas of all the sons of Jordan, from right to left, regarding the requirements of the stage. The constitution is above all considerations. The charter aims to reorganize political action, to define how we should deal with the coming stage in all fields, and how to exercise political action that is based on respect for the constitution and Jordan's pan-Arab commitment as part of this Arab nation. I will propose some ideas to a group of intellectuals representing all sectors and trends, and I will help them as much as I can. I also will leave them the chance to crystallize the charter and to present it, at a later stage, to all citizens in the homeland for the final say. I feel I thus have carried out my duties and I have been faithful to what I believe in.

Question: Can we understand from Your Majesty you believe the national charter will guarantee the experiment of the fifties won't recur?

Answer: I believe we are talking about today. The concept of sharing responsibilities, however, is not strange to me. I tried in the fifties, and I am determined to make it a success this time.

Question: But there are popular fears regarding what would happen if this experiment were similar to what happened in the fifties and end with the dissolution of parliament.

Answer: The objective is to reorganize matters in a form guaranteeing balance in favor of the march. There was an interruption in parliamentary life after the 1967 war under the most difficult circumstances. Despite this, however, we found an alternative in the formula of the National Consultative Council, then the parliament was inaugurated again following the disengagement decision. Since then, we have been preparing for elections. I have

not done all this for any reason other than I am convinced of it and of the soundness of continuing on this road. I personally have no intention to go back to any other way. I personally shouldered the responsibility for a long time, and it was a heavy burden. It is time for all sides to share the responsibilities with and after me.

Royal Decree Curbs Martial Courts' Jurisdiction

JN1601155090 Amman Domestic Service in Arabic 1200 GMT 16 Jan 90

[Text] A royal decree has been issued approving the martial administration's amendatory instruction No 1 for 1990. The instruction abolishes the martial courts' jurisdiction over the crimes and violations referred to in the laws on firearms, anticommunism, defense, violations of orders issued by the military governor, murder, shooting in the air, and counterfeiting banknotes.

Another royal decree has been issued approving an international transportation agreement for people and commodities between the Governments of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and the Republic of Iraq. The agreement provides for increasing and promoting the existing bilateral cooperation in various fields of land transportation.

Husayn: PLO Has 'Little Room' for Concessions

JN1701092290 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 17 Jan 90 p 1

[Text] Amman (J.T.)—His Majesty King Husayn has warned that the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) has little room left for political concessions in getting peace talks started with Israel, according to an interview published in an American newspaper.

"If the PLO appears to be giving and giving and giving and more is demanded of it, what can be the result, except shaking the foundation of confidence that it has from its constituency," King Husayn said in an interview published in the BOSTON GLOBE newspaper.

"My fear, my worry here is that there are possibly attempts to undermine the PLO, to destroy its image with its own constituency," he said.

King Husayn's warning came amid increased pressure from Arab leaders who have told PLO Chairman Yasir 'Arafat that he has gone too far towards satisfying the U.S. demands surrounding proposed Israel-Palestinian peace talks.

King Husayn said even though the PLO had met U.S. criteria for becoming peace negotiating partners, the peace dialogue has remained stalled.

"Basically, my feeling is that the Israeli leadership in power now is afraid of peace," King Husayn told the BOSTON GLOBE. "It is afraid to take a historic gamble and make a historic contribution...," he said.

He said the PLO's key decision to accept Israel's right to exist and adopt U.N. Security Council resolutions 242 and 338 had not spurred the peace process, and if Secretary of State James Baker failed to break the stalemate "the situation will deteriorate."

King Husayn told the GLOBE that Jordan, which in 1988 cut legal and administrative ties with the West Bank, would play a role in supporting the PLO's efforts to secure a role in negotiating an end to the Arab-Israeli conflict.

On a different subject, King Husayn said people behind recent shootings on Jordan's ceasefire line with Israel were aiming to create tension.

"There is a new situation on the ceasefire line...resulting from attacks aimed at creating a climate of tension," newspapers quoted King Husayn as saying Monday at a tree-planting ceremony.

"Perhaps there are aims and goals which go beyond limited operations against Jordan and there may be more than one party involved in mounting them," he said.

There have been several outbreaks of gunfire this month along the ceasefire line.

On Jan. 7 the Israeli army said its troops killed a Jordanian soldier in a gunbattle after he crossed the border in the northern area of Hamat Gader. The Jordanian army said a conscript based in the area and [as published] gone missing the previous day.

A Damascus-based Palestinian group, Fatah Uprising, claimed responsibility for what it said were guerrilla attacks on Israeli military patrols in the same area on Jan. 4 and 5.

Prime Minister Mudar Badran said last week infiltrators trying to reach countries bordering Jordan would be shot.

Some Jordanian officials have said Israel is manufacturing border incidents to divert attention from its attempts to quell the Palestinian uprising in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

President Saddam Arrives, Meets With King

JN1701183490 Amman Television Service in Arabic 1800 GMT 17 Jan 90

[Text] His Excellency Saddam Husayn, president of the sisterly Republic of Iraq, arrived in Amman this evening on a working visit to the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. His Majesty King Husayn led those who received his excellency upon his arrival at Amman airport. Also present were His Royal Highness Prince Hamzah, Senate President Ahmad al-Lawzi, Royal Court Chief al-Sharif Zayd Bin-Shakir, his majesty the king's political adviser, his highness the chief chamberlain, the deputy prime minister and interior minister, the ministers, the chief of

general staff, and senior civilian and military officials. The ambassadors of the Arab Cooperation Council states also attended.

His excellency was accorded an official reception. The band played the Iraqi and Jordanian national anthems and a 21-gun salute was fired to greet Jordan's great guest. His excellency and his majesty the king then reviewed the honor guard.

Private bilateral talks were conducted afterward between His Majesty King Husyan and His Excellency President Saddam Husayn at al-Nadwah Palace.

Prime Minister Returns, Comments on ACC Meeting

JN1801070890 Amman Domestic Service in English 0530 GMT 18 Jan 90

[Text] The Prime Minister Mr Mudar Badran returned home from Baghdad late last night after a 2-day working visit to Iraq. Mr Badran led Jordan's delegation to the meetings of the prime ministerial committee of the Arab Cooperation Council, the ACC, countries.

In a statement upon arrival, the prime minister said he and his Iraqi, Egyptian, and north Yemeni counterparts signed a number of agreements on cooperation among their countries. He said the accords cover cooperation in the fields of planning, local administration, industry, meteorology, and other areas.

Mr Badran said this achievement demonstrates the ACC countries' interest to develop and strengthen cooperation existing between them for the benefits of their peoples.

The prime minister went on to say that Jordan will hold a 1-year rotating presidency of the ACC prime ministerial committee. Mr Badran said he hoped that during their summit in Amman next month, the ACC leaders will endorse 27 accords on cooperation among their nations. He also expressed hope that those agreements would be implemented to give momentum to the cooperation process among the Arab Cooperation Council countries.

Paper Urges U.S. Support for International Meeting

JN1801115090 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 18 Jan 90 pp 1,20

[Editorial: "What Counts Is Credibility"]

[Text] U.S. Secretary of State James Baker affirmed yesterday his country will not pull out from the Middle East peace process, and that a tripartite meeting including him and the foreign ministers of Egypt and Israel will take place next month in Washington.

The State Department's spokeswoman a few days ago made a contradictary statement when she hinted Washington had other important issues calling for its attention if the foreign ministers of Egypt and Israel cannot make any progress on the issue of the Palestinian-Israeli dialogue. This hint was taken to mean the U.S. Administration might pull out from the Middle East peace process.

Baker's statement yesterday thus can be construed as a retreat from the stand hinted at by the department's spokeswoman. In our opinion, this retreat is the least Washington can do to express its awareness of the dangers which might result from freezing the Middle East peace process. We should also point out, however, that Washington's continued participation in the peace process is not an end in itself, but a duty it must exercise to further the peace process through close cooperation with the international community. Such a cooperation calls for applying the principle unanimously upheld by the community regarding the exchange of land for peace and acknowledging the Palestinians' right to participate in this process through the PLO, their s_le and legitimate representative, which also means acknowledging the Palestinians' right to regain their occupied land and to exercise their national rights on their national soil.

What so far has been observed is Washington still insists on the Baker plan as the key to the peace process when the international conference, which enjoys unanimous international support, is a better mechanism that does not require such a preparatory phase.

Had Washington harmonized with international unanimity, it would have helped expedite the peace process and provided proof of its seriousness and credibility. For what counts in the end is credibility, not mere participation in a political process.

Parliament Official Criticizes Jewish Emigration

JN1701124490 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 17 Jan 90 p 3

[Text] Amman (J.T.)—The Jordanian Parliament should spearhead efforts worldwide to stem the flow of Jews from the Soviet Union and Eastern European countries to occupied Palestinian land; and can dispatch envoys and delegations to the Eastern bloc to support the Arab cause, former foreign minister and lower House of Parliament member Tahir al-Masri said Tuesday. [16 January]

"The continued migration of Jews to Israel constitutes a grave danger to the Arab Nation in general and the Palestinians in particular and therefore Arab governments must join hands and do all they can to contain such migration," al-Masri said in a statement to the JORDAN NEWS AGENCY, PETRA.

"The new regimes in Eastern Europe will no doubt listen to the Arab and Jordanian envoys, but a concerted effort is needed by all concerned parties if the Arab bid is to achieve success at the official level," al-Masri added.

Al-Masri, who chairs the Lower House of Parliament's Foreign Affairs Committee, said that "confronting the emigration danger is the Arab Nation's responsibility

since an increase in the manpower in Israel will increase its temptation to launch further acts of aggression on the Arab countries to settle the newcomers."

Al-Masri said the Arab countries should also work on two other fronts; provide material and moral support for the Palestinian intifadah and exercise pressure on the United States to change its position on the conflict.

According to Ghazi al-Sa'di, a Jordanian journalist and a specialist in Israeli affairs, the direct air route between Moscow and Israel, which was recently inaugurated, is bound to increase the number of Jewish immigrants.

Al-Sa'di said that between 1971 and 1985, 159,904 Jews came to Israel from the Soviet Union. In 1989 alone, a total of 71,196 Jews arrived to settle in the occupied Arab lands from the Soviet Union, up from a mere 18,965 in 1988, he added.

He said a total of 500 Jews came during November 1989 alone, and 100 others came on the first direct flight which launched the new Moscow-Tel Aviv route.

Commenting on the situation, Palestine National Council (PNC) Speaker Shaykh 'Abd-al-Hamid al-Sa'ih said that the arrival of thousands of Jewish immigrants will increase the sufferings of the Palestinian people because Israel will absorb the newcomers at their expense.

Editorial on Arab Response to Jewish Emigration

JN1601114290 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 16 Jan 90 p 4

[Editorial: "Shamir's Challenge to the Arab World"]

[Text] Israel's Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir was at least honest about it when he declared out in the open Sunday that Israel will have to hold on to the occupied territories to accommodate the mass immigration of Soviet Jews. The question that remains is: Will the Arab World be equally honest in explaining what they intend to do about it? The Arab parties most concerned about the Palestinian case, especially the PLO, are duty-bound to inform the Palestinian people under occupation what operational ideas or plans they have in mind to combat this large Israeli design on the Arab territories. If Arab governments are going to be satisfied with expression of concern and anxiety about the imminent Israeli plan to populate the occupied Arab territories with new waves of Jewish emigrants from far away country, and plan only to hold conferences about it then the Palestinian people waging their intifada for over two years must know this and know it fast.

Shamir was most candid before his audience in Tel Aviv Sunday when he equated the projected mass Jewish emigration from the Soviet Union to a miracle like "all miracles that have always rescued the Jewish people." Unfortunately the Arabs are short on miracles these days and unless they can have the kind of political will and serious determination to frustrate this latest Israeli conspiracy against the West Bank and Gaza Strip, then as Shamir has promised his people, in five years the whole issue of negotiating the future of these territories would be finished and done with. Meanwhile, the Palestinian people will continue waging their heroic struggle for liberty and self-determination against a background of fait accomplis by Israel before the very eyes of the Arab governments and people.

In this context it is tragic to note that Moscow and Washington are in league about this very ominious issue. With the USSR opening its gates for Soviet Jews to leave the country and the U.S. funding nearly the entire project of mass Jewish immigration to Israel, the Arab World has to reckon with this dangerous dimension as well. What better or stronger signals do the Arab countries need from the world to come to the conclusion that the relaxation in the East-West relations will not bring them much comfort as much as one would want to welcome the positive developments between the two camps? Clearly the Arab World will be left out in the cold against the backdrop of drastic improvements in relations between the East and the West. Instead of expressing concern and anxiety about the course of history, the Arab governments and peoples need to indulge in deep soul-searching about their fate and destiny in the coming decades.

Paper Urges Demarche With USSR on Emigration

JN1701135090 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 17 Jan 90 pp 1, 20

[Editorial: "What Are the Arabs Waiting For?"]

[Text] Yitzhaq Shamir hardly needed any backing for his expansionist ambitions when he spoke about Soviet Jewish emigration, for he announced without scruples his government intends to hold to the West Bank and Gaza to absorb the new wave of Jewish immigrants and to settle them in the occupied territories.

No doubt, such declared Israeli intentions should sound the first alarm and alert everyone concerned to the real danger of this emigration and its serious consequences, not only on peace prospects in the region, but also on Arab-Soviet relations.

While we do not like to interfere in any internal Soviet issue or in the freedom of travel from and to the USSR, we cannot at the same time ignore the serious consequences of Soviet policy of leaving the door wide open for Jewish emigration. Such a policy works directly against our vital interests by increasing Israel's extremism and lust for more land and expansion and pouring fuel on the smouldering fire of the Middle East crisis.

We hope tackling this issue now will move from newspaper columns to the lobbies of the Arab League and the Arab Foreign Ministries. This urgent and grave issue

needs to be tackled seriously at the highest Arab political level possible by taking all the necessary diplomatic steps.

We call therefore upon the Arab Foreign Ministers Council to convene as soon as possible to tackle all aspects of this issue and dispatch a ministerial delegation to Moscow to discuss the emigration issue and to explain its grave dangers on our pan-Arab interests and its effect on our historic relations with the USSR. Perhaps such action would help prevent the spread of this emigration wave by tackling it from its roots and thus stop infusing Israeli extremism with more manpower, which only would enhance the expansionist ambitions and land lust dominating Israel's psyche and heart.

PETRA, Radio, TV To Gain More Independence

JN1601131090 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 16 Jan 90 p 3

[Text] Amman (J.T.)—Minister of Information Ibrahim 'Izz-al-Din Monday opened a three-day round-table conference for the Arab news agencies federation and the news media of the Federal Republic of Germany and announced that the government was in the process of promoting the JORDAN NEWS AGENCY, PETRA, and the radio and television corporation in a bid to bolster their media roles.

"We are seeking to restructure the national news agency with the purpose of granting it further flexibility in covering events occurring in various parts of the Kingdom and to enable it to cope with pan-Arab and international developments," 'Izz-al-Din said in his opening address to the meeting.

PETRA will be granted administrative and financial independence and will receive all possible financial support from the government to enable it to carry out its mission, the minister said.

The Jordan Radio and Television Corporation, 'Izz-al-Din said, will also be given a degree of independence, enabling it to offer a better performance and contribute towards the development of the country.

The government has now granted the press total freedom of expression and writing and all intellectuals and writers have the right to voice the Jordanian people's aspirations and reflect their demands and their views, 'Izz-al-Din said.

He said the new policy was adopted within the new era of democracy and parliamentary rule in Jordan.

The minister voiced hope that the round-table conference would contribute towards deepening the North and South dialogue and increase the West German media coverage of developments in the Arab World.

Cabinet Revokes Anticommunism Law, Amendments

JN1601203090 Amman Television Service in English 2000 GMT 16 Jan 90

[Text] The Cabinet decided at a meeting held this evening to revoke the law on anticommunism issued in 1953 and its amendments. The decision was in line with the government's commitment to revoke or amend all laws harming public liberties. It was also in harmony with the new democratic process in the country. The Cabinet is expected to issue decisions soon transferring the authority to look into a number of crimes from military courts to civilian courts.

Envoy McCarthy Asks U.S. Staff To Leave Beirut

NC1801094490 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 0900 GMT 18 Jan 90

[Text] Quoting reliable sources, AL-SHARQ newspaper says that U.S. Ambassador John McCarthy has asked the advisers and officials remaining at the U.S. Embassy in the eastern area to leave immediately for Cyprus.

The paper adds that Counsellor Gabi 'Akkar, security chief Mustafa Karaydiyah, and a U.S. citizen will leave for Cyprus today in response to the ambassador's request. The sources are further quoted as saying that those close to Ambassador McCarthy expect very grave events in Lebanon in a week or 10 days time.

Sa'adah Submits Letter of Resignation

NC1801151590 (Clandestine) The Lebanese Radio in Arabic 1200 GMT 18 Jan 90

[Text] AL-ANWAR reports today that [Phalangist Party leader] Dr George Sa'adah has sent a letter of resignation to Mr Ilyas al-Hirawi. Sa'adah said his resignation is final in view of the circumstances which prevent him from carrying out his duties.

Former Deputy Michel Sasin [deputy prime minister and minister of labor in the al-Huss cabinet] had earlier stated that his decision on whether to resign would depend on the stand Dr Sa'adah took on remaining in the alleged government.

Pro-'Awn Force Preparing 'Terrorist' Acts

NC1701204390 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 2000 GMT 17 Jan 90

[Text] Official circles today received security reports indicating that the commando unit of former Lebanese Army Commander General Michel 'Awn is preparing to carry out bombings, assassinations, and limited raids in West Beirut and elsewhere. These reports say that official Lebanese and Arab personalities will be the target of these assassinations. The reports add that the acts of sabotage, bombings, and raids will be centered on targets in upper al-Matn. These reports say that the unit members will wear Lebanese or Syrian military uniforms for camouflage during their operations.

The same reports indicate that the unit members may carry out limited sea landings in some areas as part of their terrorist operations.

The official circles stressed that the concerned security forces have taken precautionary measures to confront such acts.

Press Spokesman Criticizes 'Awn's Warning to Media

NC1601214090 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 2100 GMT 16 Jan 90

[Text] Following the warning communique addressed by rebel officer Michel 'Awn to the Lebanese media, Lebanon's press spokesman Muhammad al-Ba'labakki consulted with members of the Press Association and the press establishments.

Commenting on this warning, Al-Ba'labakki said: The Lebanese media adheres to the principle of the freedom of the press and it exercises this freedom objectively and courteously, particularly at this extremely critical stage in Lebanon's existence. If the writer of the communique had taken a close look at the issue, he would have avoided committing this error. In such a situation, how could this be in tune with a former call to the various parties to act freely?

'Awn Holds Meeting With Media

NC1701150390 Paris AFP in English 1240 GMT 17 Nov 90

[Excerpts] Beirut, Jan 17 (AFP)—Lebanese Christian leader Michel 'Awn was Wednesday locked in a test of wills with Christian media after ordering journalists working in regions under his control to stop referring to President Ilyas al-Hirawi by title.

Two radio stations, one close to the Lebanese Forces (LF) Christian militia and the other to the Khatib party, suspended news broadcasts after General 'Awn issued the directive Tuesday. They said Wednesday they were "studying the situation."

The Lebanese Broadcasting Corporation, controlled by the LF, also cancelled its evening news program on Tuesday.

The suspensions deprived the Lebanese of three of their principal sources of information.

The AL-DIYAR newspaper, published in Christian-held territory and also sympathetic to the Lebanese Forces, appealed to journalists Wednesday to unite "in order to prevent the smothering of public freedom." [passage omitted]

Gen. 'Awn on Tuesday told media representatives, during a meeting described as "stormy," that his decision had "nothing to do with freedom of the press, since infractions will be prosecuted according to sections of the penal code on collaboration with the enemy and not according to press law."

He said the media "can write or say whatever they want, on condition that they do not give titles to agents who have usurped them."

The French-language L'ORIENT-LE-JOUR, whose editorial staff works in Christian East Beirut, made only one reference to "President al-Hirawi" on Wednesday, while

two other papers based in 'Awn-controlled territory, AL-ANWAR and AL-BAYRAQ, did not mention the titles of Mr. al-Hirawi and Mr. al-Huss.

In Syrian-controlled west Beirut, the AL-SHARQ daily described the general's order that of "a vain dictator, blinded by power."

AL-DIYAR Decides To Ignore 'Awn Communique

NC1701094290 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 0825 GMT 17 Jan 90

[From the press review]

[Excerpts] [Passage omitted] The newspapers today reported reactions to the decision of the information minister [General Michel 'Awn]. They highlighted the decision by the radio and television stations in the eastern area to suspend news transmissions pending an appropriate decision on the matter. [passage omitted]

Under the title "With All Due Respect, We Will Not Comply," AL-DIYAR said: It is a moment of truth. It is a time for resolution. Without any defiance and with all due respect to everyone. Permit us to confront reality and adopt a decision. What will it benefit us if we write a great deal and say a great deal and then escape at the moment of confrontation. For this reason, we have decided, with all respect, not to abide by all communiques. It is hard for us to abandon our freedom, betray our pen, relinquish our office, and show ingratitude to our readers. [passage omitted]

AL-SAFIR newspaper comments on General 'Awn's decision regarding the media. It says: Rescuing Lebanon begins with rescuing its liberties, now, tomorrow, and at all times. [passage omitted]

'Awn To Take Legal Action

NC1701151290 (Clandestine) Voice of the Mountain in Arabic to Lebanon 1230 GMT 17 Jan 90

[Text] Michel 'Awn, head of the military clique, chaired a meeting attended by two aides, officers Edgar Ma'luf and 'Isam Abu-Jamrah, as well as Judge Joseph Furayhah and Judge Fawzi Daghir. 'Awn decided to take what he called immediate legal measures against the information media which have not abided by his measures. The measures called for taking them to court.

According to reports today, AL-SAYYAD magazine and AL-ANWAR newspaper will not be published in protest against the decision. The management of MAGAZINE has also decided that the magazine will not appear this week.

We have just learned that Michel 'Awn will take the AL-DIYAR newspaper to court. His administration charged AL-DIYAR's publisher with publishing an editorial in the paper today under the headline "With All Respect, We Do Not Agree." The 'Awn administration said this could harm the safety of the state and is a violation of the publications law. It has decided to suspend publication of AL-DIYAR for 7 days.

Media Representatives Hold 'Emergency' Meeting

NC1701152590 (Clandestine) Voice of the Mountain in Arabic to Lebanon 1400 GMT 17 Jan 90

[Text] An emergency meeting has been held under the chairmanship of dean of the press corps Muhammad al-Ba'labakki, and attended by members of the press and editors unions, members of the printing and media unions, and the Lebanese journalists union. The conferees decided to:
1. Proclaim Saturday, 20 January, as the day for defending press freedom in Lebanon;
2. Establish a followup committee, which will consist of colleagues Basim al-Sab', Tanyus D'aybis, and 'Arafat Hijazi, to conduct the necessary contacts and submit recommendations to an expanded meeting; and
3. Keep the meeting in open session.

VOL Extends Decision To Suspend News Bulletins

NC1801160890 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1415 GMT 18 Jan 90

[Text] The editorial board of Voice of Lebanon radio is still studying how to deal with the communique issued by the information minister 2 days ago. As this subject requires further study and consideration before a position is adopted, the editorial board has decided to extend its decision to suspend the broadcast of news bulletins for a further period.

We thank our dear listeners for the sincere sentiments they have expressed and we appreciate their kindness and understanding.

'Secret' Syrian Agreement To Withdraw Cited

JN1301192690 Kuwait AL-QABAS in Arabic 11 Jan 90 p 22

[By 'Abd-al-Karim Abu-al-Nasr]

[Excerpts] Paris—AL-QABAS reveals here the secrets and details of an important and exciting issue related to the existence of a secret Saudi-Syrian written agreement signed in Damascus which contains for the first time a Syrian commitment to withdraw all of its troops from Lebanon in two stages. This issue began with a U.S. report sent from Damascus to the American newspaper THE WASHINGTON POST. However, the widely-circulated newspaper has thus far refrained from publishing this detailed report.

AL-QABAS has managed to obtain the full text of the report which is in THE WASHINGTON POST's possession. It has also contacted sources closely connected with the Higher Arab Tripartite Committee to confirm the existence of such an important secret Syrian-Saudi agreement. These sources confirmed to AL-QABAS that there

really is an unpublished, documented Syrian pledge on the subject of its forces' withdrawal from Lebanon. [passage omitted]

The report contains the following main points:

1. The Syrian leadership has officially pledged in writing to withdraw its troops from all Lebanese territories in two stages. This official pledge came in a secret written agreement signed in Damascus by Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Sa'ud al-Faysal and Syrian Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar'. This secret agreement was deemed to be an appendix to the al-Ta'if agreement; that is, the national reconciliation document endorsed by the Lebanese deputies in al-Ta'if on 22 October 1989. This agreement was signed during Prince Sa'ud al-Faysal's visit to Damascus on 20 October last year. Since then, this agreement has been shrouded in secrecy and nothing published about it.

2. Following the signing of this agreement, Saudi Arabia informed the Moroccan and Algerian Governments about it and briefed them on its contents. It is well known that Saudi Arabia, Algeria, and Morocco are the countries forming the Higher Arab Tripartite Committee in charge of solving the Lebanese problem.

3. According to this secret agreement, the Syrian leadership pledges to withdraw its troops from Lebanon in two stages. In the first stage the Syrian forces will pull out from Beirut and the mountain area and move to al-Biqa' once the Lebanese national reconciliation government manages to impose its legitimate authority. In the second stage the Syrian Government will negotiate with the Lebanese Government with the aim of reaching an agreement on a timetable for the Syrian forces' withdrawal from Lebanon.

4. This is the first time Syria has pledged in writing to withdraw all its troops from Lebanon. It is also the first time that Syria has made such a written pledge without receiving a similar pledge from the Israeli Government to withdraw its forces from all Lebanese territories. However, the report adds that in spite of this, the full Syrian forces' withdrawal from Lebanon will be linked to and conditional on parallel Israeli steps; namely, the withdrawal of all Israeli forces from Lebanon. [passage omitted]

UN's Goulding Arrives in Beirut, Meets Al-Hirawi

NC1801103090 (Clandestine) Voice of the Mountain in Arabic to Lebanon 1000 GMT 18 Jan 90

[Text] President Ilyas al-Hirawi received UN Under Secretary General Marrack Goulding immediately upon the latter's arrival in Beirut this morning. During the meeting, they discussed the situation in Lebanon and the task of the UN Interim Force in Lebanon. Goulding said after the meeting that the purpose of his visit is to reiterate international support for the legitimate government led by President Ilyas al-Hirawi.

Fatah Accuses Al-Banna, Hizballah of Kidnappings

NC1801095890 Paris AFP in English 0939 GMT 18 Jan 90

[Text] 'Ayn al-Hilwah, Lebanon, Jan 18 (AFP)—An extremist group headed by Palestinian dissident Abu Nidal [Sabri al-Banna] collaborated with a pro-Iranian Hizballah unit in the abduction last year of two Red Cross workers, an official with the PLO movement Fatah charged here.

Zayd Wahbah, in an interview with AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE, said Swiss nationals Elio Errique[illegible] and Emanual Christian were abucted October 6 by Abu Nidal's Fatah Revolutionary Council and a unit from Hizballah, a militant Shiite militia.

The two men who worked as orthopedic technicians for the International Committee for the Red Cross were seized in the southern Lebanese port of Sidon near here.

Mr. Wahbah said earlier this week that his group had been unable to intervene because Fatah does not exercise complete control in the Sidon region, where two Palestinian refugee camps are located.

"We also have information that the two Swiss hostages were recently held in the Iqlim al-Kharrub" said Mr. Wahbah, referring to the mountainous region controlled by the Druze Progressive Socialist Party north of here.

The Abu Nidal group denied any responsibility in the abduction after similar charges were levelled against it by Fatah, which is loyal to Palestine Liberation Organization Chairman Yasir 'Arafat.

Mr. Wahbah also accused Hizballah of "covering up for terrorist action" launched by both the Abu Nidal group and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command, another dissident Palestinian movement.

He said Hizballah was using religion as an excuse to infiltrate Palestinian ranks.

"Hizballah must stop these terrorist practices and settle the issue of the hostages. We cannot have ties with hostage-takers," said Mr. Wahbah.

Amal Movement Releases French Woman

NC1701143990 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 1400 GMT 17 Jan 90

[Text] French Ambassador Rene Ala has stated that unity is necessary for Lebanon's salvation. He stressed that his government is closely following the Lebanese situation and is trying to find solutions to Lebanon's problems. He indicated that the French people are paying attention to the current complications and difficulties in Lebanon.

Ambassador Ala was asked about the French woman [not further identified] who was released by the Amal

Movement yesterday. He said: The Amal Movement handed the woman over to me yesterday. I consider this initiative to be a humanitarian and friendly gesture.

The French ambassador made this statement when he visited Amal Movement leader Minister Nabih Birri today.

'Awn Supports Sit-In at Embassy in Paris

NC1401210590 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 2015 GMT 14 Jan 90

[Text] Prime Minister General Michel 'Awn described the sit-in at the Lebanese Embassy in Paris as an act of resistance against the occupier's will, represented in the diplomatic transfers which the tools of the Syrian occupier have carried out.

In a message he sent to those staging the sit-in at the embassy in protest of the diplomatic transfers, Gen 'Awn hoped that this move will extend to other countries. He regretted the fact that the French Government has recognized President al-Hirawi and hoped that it will reconsider its stands.

AFP reported that the government of Al-Huss intends to ask the French authorities to vacate the Lebanese Embassy building in Paris if Ambassador Fu'ad al-Turk, whom Al-Huss government appointed as Lebanon's ambassador to France, cannot settle the issue within days.

Albert Mansur, a minister in the Al-Huss government, has said that the state will resort to all legal means to consolidate the legtimacy and end the mutiny and partition. He added that resort to force when necessary is one of these means.

French To Remove 'Awn Supporters

NC1701071790 Beirut Voice of National Resistance in Arabic 0530 GMT 17 Jan 90

[Text] According to reports from Paris, the French authorities have ordered the French police to oust supporters of former army commander Michel 'Awn who have been occupying the Lebanese Embassy since last week.

Slogans Against 'Awn Raised in Tripoli, North

NC1501183290 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 1630 GMT 15 Jan 90

[Text] Slogans and placards calling for General Michel 'Awn to get out of B'abda Palace were raised in the city of Tripoli and most towns and villages in the north today.

Some of these slogans said: Return the stolen millions; the alleged distinction among the Lebanese communities is the slogan of the racists dominating the eastern area; Michel 'Awn's call for the establishment of a distinguished Christian society is a violation of justice and equality in the Lebanese society; no to your alleged liberation; yes to the unity of the land and the people; no to a call that bears the seeds of malevolence and fanaticism in the coexisting and tolerant north.

Pictures of Prime Minister Dr Salim al-Huss were also raised during the weekend, bearing the inscription: Together, we build the future Lebanon. They were signed by the Tripoli Resistance—the Movement of Future Lebanon. [al-Muqawamah al-Tarabulsiyah, Harakat Lubnan al-Mustaqbal].

'Awn Claims Al-Hirawi, Al-Huss 'Agents' of West

NC1201130390 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1215 GMT 12 Jan 90

[Text] Prime Minister General Michel 'Awn today addressed protestors at B'abda Palace, where students from 15 schools were participating in the sit-in.

'Awn strongly criticized President al-Hirawi, Prime Minister al-Huss, and the ministers. He described them as people without any patriotic feeling and agents of the Western powers. He said they want to deliver Lebanon as a prize to occupier Syria and to loot what remains of Lebanon.

'Awn on Solidarity With North To Expel 'Invaders'

NC1101133290 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1215 GMT 11 Jan 90

[Text] Addressing delegations visiting B'abda Palace today, Prime Minister General Michel 'Awn said: We will complete the march of liberation regardless of the attempts to cover up the Syrian occupation. He stressed that he is determined to surmount all obstacles placed in the path of the march of liberation.

Referring to the postponement of the day of solidarity with the north until 20 January, 'Awn said: We will celebrate with our dear north, which is the source of our army personnel. On its soil exists God's cedar, which is our national emblem and flag. We remember steadfast and patient Tripoli, which will not remain captive forever. We will eliminate the combat lines between the north's villages and towns. We will expel the invaders in solidarity with the north so that liberty will return to it and to all areas under Syrian occupation. This week will be a week of anxiety and harassment for them. We will not let them rest in our areas and we will not let them entrench their occupation. They will see the degree of our effectiveness in the areas where they are present.

Yesterday, a resistance operation was carried against Syrian positions between Bulunya and Duhur al-Shuywar in al-Matn. The Syrians were forced to withdraw, even though they hide this news from the Syrian and Lebanese public.

Junblatt Addresses PSP Congress 13 Jan

NC1301115290 (Clandestine) Voice of the Mountain in Arabic to Lebanon 1000 GMT 13 Jan 90

[Excerpts] The 31st Progressive Socialist Party [PSP] General Congress is continuing its meetings at the al-Shuf tourist complex in B'aqlin. About 30 minutes ago, various speakers finished making remarks about Party Leader Walid Junblatt's speech. The congress is now discussing amendments to the party constitution submitted by Dr Bilal 'Abdallah, member of the preparatory committee. [passage omitted]

In his opening speech, Progressive Socialist Party Leader Walid Junblatt said: We now live in a Lebanese atmosphere in which supporters of the regime and supporters of the reactionary Arab regime are trying to rehabilitate the sectarian system. The sectarian system in Lebanon has ended forever, regardless of how much they try to revive this system in al-Ta'if or anywhere else. The sectarian system will collapse and end for good. Today we are witnessing the decline of this system.

Junblatt said: We support this government if it pursues a national, Arab policy and if it implements acceptable reforms at this very critical stage in Lebanon's life. We will try to make changes through this government. If this becomes impossible, we are much stronger than this government and this system. There is a political game which must be played.

He added: There are many contradictions in the government. There is nationalist representation and there is representation without color, taste, or value so far. There is a column which came from the eastern area. We are dealing with it with complete honesty and realism. But we will not change our political position. We will try to draw these people to our political position.

Junblatt added: We are at the threshold of either the collapse of the country as a united homeland or of unification. We can prevent the homeland's collapse and partition if this government takes decisive political, administrative, and economic measures and later, if necessary, military measures. If we try to deal with matters with stopgap administrative measures as they did in the diplomatic corps, hesitate to suspend salary payments to the eastern area, or deal with matters in a classical manner far removed from reality, I think this government will be committing a great crime because it will be helping in one way or another to partition the country while not realizing the seriousness of what is happening in Lebanon.

7 Political Bureau Members Elected

NC1301183790 (Clandestine) Voice of the Mountain in Arabic to Lebanon 1730 GMT 13 Jan 90

[Text] The Assembly of Guides [jum'iyat al-murshidin] of the Progressive Socialist Party [PSP] has elected Farid Jubran as chairman of the assembly and Tawfiq Barakat as deputy chairman. It also elected seven members of the Political Bureau, out of 26 candidates. After the votes had been counted, the following were found to have won: Akram Shuhayyib, Anton al-Ashqar, Khalil Ahmad Khalil, Joseph al-Qazzi, Sa'id al-Dawi, 'Ali Jabir, and Dawud Hanita.

5 Syrians Killed in 'Resistance' Operation

NC1301131590 (Clandestine) The Lebanese Radio in Arabic 1200 GMT 13 Jan 90

[Text] As part of the resistance operations against the Syrian occupation, a group fired RPG's at a Syrian military truck in the town of Bi'warta in al-Shahhar al-Gharbi at 0700 on 12 January. As a result, the truck was burned, and five Syrian soldiers were killed. Immediately afterward, the Syrian occupation troops cordoned off the area.

Chamber Secretary General's Death Announced

NC1401180290 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 1630 GMT 14 Jan 90

[Excerpt] Chamber of Deputies Speaker Husayn al-Husayni announced the death of Ihsan Abu-Khalil, secretary general of the Chamber of Deputies, this morning. [passage omitted]

Higgins' Killers Said Released From Prison

44000169 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew
8 Jan 90 p 2

[By Sha'ul Tzdaqa]

[Text] European intelligence agencies now are certain the American Lieutenant Colonel William Higgins was executed in December 1988, after being tortured, and also know the identity of the three Hizballah members who murdered him.

As recalled, Hizballah had claimed the Higgins' execution was an act of retaliation for Israel's abduction of Shaykh 'Abd-al-Karim 'Ubayd. It recently became clear that after his abduction, Higgins was transferred to the Arak-Kra' camp near Beirut, where he was interrogated and tortured for several months. Since Higgins was considered a senior officer in the Pentagon, and because of his close ties with Caspar Weinberger, then US secretary of defense, sources in London feared Higgins' interrogators attained vital information from him, which then was transferred to other intelligence organizations in return for money or other information.

According to evidence collected by Western agents, Syrian forces apprehended the kidnapers last September and extensively interrogated them. Among them was Muhammad Rihal, arrested in Beirut on 31 August 1989, and Mustafa Marwi, arrested a few days later. They all were brought to Damascus and two weeks ago were released. It is unclear why Syria released the murderers. European sources further report the US rejected an Israeli proposal to try 'Ubayd in the US for his responsibility in kidnapping Lt Col William Higgins. According to those sources, the reason is a US wish to improve relations with Iran, with which they now are conducting low-level secret negotiations.

USSR Reportedly Withdrawing Several Advisers

JN1701173490 Kuwait AL-RA'Y AL-'AMM in Arabic 15 Jan 90 pp 1, 23

[Text] London—AL-RA'Y AL-'AMM—Diplomatic sources have revealed the number of Soviet advisers in Syria has been reduced greatly in recent months. The sources said the withdrawal of advisers was based on a Soviet initiative. Hundreds of advisers left Syria for home 2 weeks ago aboard Soviet military transport planes.

The sources added 2,240 Soviet advisers and military personnel worked in Syria until mid-1987. The Soviet Union withdrew 550 advisers in early 1988 and 500 advisers in late 1988. In April 1990, 300 advisers will be withdrawn.

A further 180 experts will be withdrawn toward the end of October 1990. The sources said in December 1989, 500 advisers were withdrawn. The sources also noted this development indicates a change in Soviet policy toward Syria and the Middle East. Furthermore, the development indicates a rapprochement and understanding between Moscow and Washington.

Article Assesses Prospects for Resumed U.S. Ties

JN1501182090 Kuwait AL-QABAS in Arabic
8 Jan 90 p 26

[By Hisham Milhim]

[Text] Washington—Official and diplomatic American sources have told AL-QABAS top-level U.S-Syrian contacts are pointing to a shared interest in normalizing bilateral relations. They add Damascus has communicated to Washington the Syrian Foreign Ministry plans shortly to send an ambassador to Washington.

In last Friday's [5 January] issue, AL-QABAS revealed President George Bush had sent a letter to Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad and received a reply. The American letter stipulated three conditions the Syrians have accommodated, and they have put forward their own conditions.

Although these sources have indicated a number of obstacles to a normalization of ties, which cannot take place until Syria's name is removed from the list of countries Washington contends sponsor terrorism, they point out the main stumbling block is Ahmad Jibril, leader of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command [PFLP-GC]. The U.S. Administration wants him expelled from Syria for his suspected involvement in the bombing of the Pan Am airliner in December 1988.

The sources add the two governments' desire for a degree of qualitative change in their relationship does not point to an imminent drastic turn in direction by either party. It rather signifies Damascus realizes the need to reconsider certain old assumptions in light of the change in the nature of relations between Washington and Moscow, and the impact of the "new thinking" in Mosocw on its Arab relations, in addition to the end of the Gulf War and other Arab developments.

Last fall's New York meeting between Secretary Baker and Syria's Al-Shar' marked a landmark on the path of improved relations and stepped up high-level contacts. It was said the meeting identified points of agreement that could be developed if and when the obstacles to a resumption of relations are removed. Baker reportedly intimated to Al-Shar' Washington's desire to improve ties, but that the key was a solution to the Jibril problem. The U.S. secretary was further reported to have emphasized Washington was not out to isolate Syria or exclude it from the peace process. Washington is convinced a peace settlement also must provide a solution to the Israeli-occupied Golan Heights.

For his part, the Syrian minister welcomed the U.S. position and stressed his country's desire to improve relations and its readiness to deal seriously with any

evidence Washington may provide against any individual suspected of involvement in the Pan Am incident. The minister pointed out the evidence presented so far was not convincing. The two sides expressed their support for the Arab League's efforts to resolve peacefully the Lebanese conflict.

In contacts following the New York meeting, which included messages from Secretary Baker to Syrian officials, Damascus asked Washington to translate its desire for improved relations with Syria into action by abolishing the economic sanctions it imposed against Syria in 1986 when Britain implicated Syria in the attempt to bomb an Israeli El Al plane in London, in what became known as the "al-Hindawi affair." Washington responded to this by asking for the expulsion or arrest of Jibril, and by presenting new "evidence" against him.

The sources say Damascus and Washington realize how difficult a solution to the Jibril problem is. Through their public statements and diplomatic contacts, U.S. officials repeatedly emphasize "terrorism" is "a very important topic on the agenda of U.S.-Syrian relations," especially in the wake of the Pan Am bombing. They point to the increasing pressure on the U.S. Administration by Congress, the families of the victims, public opinion, and the media, who all demand those responsible for bombing the plane be exposed and punished.

Washington has welcomed Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad's public and private assurances of Syria's readiness to punish any one on its territory proven involved in the Pan Am bombing. U.S. officials say Syria provides bases and protection for the PFLP-GC, and, therefore, cannot ignore the implications of its acts.

The sources told AL-QABAS: "We give special attantion to the PFLP-GC because it has its headquarters in Damascus." The sources added: "We are trying to convince the Syrians it is not in their interest to have terrorist organizations in Syria or in the al-Biqa' valley, and that they must control and restrict the movements of these organizations." Washington understands Damascus continues to allow the Abu-Nidal [Sabri al-Banna] organization and the Japanese Red Army to operate in the al-Biqa' valley. The sources go on to say: "The Syrians say they are not responsible for the activities of organizations that operate outside their territory. But we tell them their forces are deployed in the al-Biqa' valley and can control these organizations. At any rate, the basic problem continues to be Ahmad Jibril, and he resides in Syria."

Responsible U.S. and Arab sources say Damascus has informed Washington evidence against Ahmad Jibril submitted by the United States is "insufficient to prove his guilt and cannot be accepted by U.S. courts as evidence."

The two sides agree Damascus will not abandon Jibril easily "because he is not Abu-Nidal, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-GC is the last real Palestinian organization dominated by Syria to any extent, no one takes the Abu-Musa [Sa'id Musa Muragha] group or al-Sa'iqah seriously, and because the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine and the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine maintain close relations with Damascus but are not dominated by it."

The U.S. sources say Syria "gradually is reducing its relations with terrorist organizations, especially Abu-Nidal's organization and others. We admitted this in our latest report on terrorism issued by the State Department." The sources continue: "there are signs Syria knows its relations with these organizations are fruitless and lead to negative results. We are confident they will look carefully and seriously into the new evidence we will submit to them concerning Jibril. Although we do not know whether Syria will now abandon Jibril, we know the Syrians are dissatisfied with some of his positions, especially his cooperation with Hizballah. They also have expressed deep dissatisfaction with his threats against the novelist Salman Rushdie."

In light of this, official U.S. sources denied U.S. commentator Jack Anderson's allegations Washington had warned Syria if it did not extradite, or at least expel Jibril, the United States would sever relations with Syria. These sources stated Anderson's article "was inaccurate and exaggerated." They also said the State Department did not strongly deny the content of the article, because it did not want to appear to defend Damascus or Jibril and thus face severe criticism from the mass media or the families of the victims."

Following the conviction of Al-Hindawi, the United States, Britain, and other countries jointly imposed a series of economic and political sanctions on Damascus. The political sanctions included recalling the U.S. ambassador to Washington, the reduction of the diplomatic mission, and banning high level diplomatic contacts.

The economic sanctions included preventing U.S. planes from landing in Damascus; banning U.S. companies' activities in Syria, including three U.S. oil companies exploring for oil in Syria; and depriving Syria of U.S. loans and financial credits.

Washington later abolished some of these sanctions, and has ignored others. The first decision taken regarding this was to appoint Edward Djerejian ambassador in Damascus in 1987. Although the ban on the exchange of high-level visits still stands from the official point of view, both sides constantly ignore it. The U.S. Government has given U.S. oil companies enough time to hand over control of their operations and property to other companies. For example, the U.S. company, Shell, transferred its share of operations to Shell Netherlands. The U.S. sanctions have not obstructed the oil companies' operations, but have delayed their development and opened the door for other companies to prospect for gas and oil.

These U.S. companies are playing a major role in the new Syrian oil fields in Dayr al-Zawr, which, since 1987,

began to yield good quality oil. Production from these fields reached around 200,000 barrels per day in 1988. Their production by the end of 1989 was expected to reach 250,000 barrels per day, but that target was not reached due to technical problems. In the event U.S. sanctions are abolished, it is expected U.S. oil and gas companies again will become active in Syria.

Arab diplomatic sources well-informed about Syrian politics say Damascus, which now realizes the main value of the U.S. sanctions is in their political significance, not in their economic impact, wants cancellation of the sanctions to open the door for European companies to enter into Syria and to prompt Britain to cancel its sanctions against Syria.

Arab and U.S. sources agree that while Damascus is trying to improve its relations with Washington, it is trying to improve its relations with Western Europe and to take advantage of its participation in the Euro-Arab dialogue. It also continues to improve its Arab ties. It is expected Syrian diplomatic appointments, which will include Syria's embassies in Europe and the Arab world, will accelerate these efforts.

U.S. officials and experts say even if a solution is found to the Jibril problem, this would not necessarily mean Syria and the United States will have healthy relations. Regarding this, a U.S. official tells AL-QABAS: "We would welcome Jibril's arrest or expulsion. This does not mean, however, that the sanctions automatically will be canceled. It naturally would create favorable circumstances for normalizing relations, especially if Syria severs its ties with other terrorist organizations. We must not forget it still is on the list of countries supporting terrorism."

Yahya Sadawiski, a Syrian affairs expert at the Brookings Institute in Washington, subscribes to this assesment. He told AL-QABAS "if Syria wants the sanctions lifted, it will have to make vigorous efforts in Congress to overcome opposition by Israel's supporters. This calls for fundamental Syrian concessions concerning the conflict with Israel. Syria will have to do more than just expel Jibril—something Syria is unlikely to do."

Sadawiski, author of a number of studies on Syria, indicates the presence of an anti-Syria lobby in Congress that includes not only pro-Israel members, but also supporters of Lebanon's General Michel 'Awn and Arab countries opposed to Syrian policies in that country. Sadawiski points out the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen, has, during the past 4 years, been gradually leaning to the right, but it still figures on the list of countries sponsoring terrorism, due to a failure to convince Washington to drop its name. Sadawiski says Iraq succeeded where the PDRY has failed because of the former's influence and financial resources and the support it has with major American companies that have opposed punishing Iraq for allegely using chemical weapons against the Kurds.

Two studies on Syria conducted by the pro-Israel "Washington Institute on Near Eastern Policies" and released a few days ago, illustrate the uphill task Syria faces in Congress and pro-Israeli circles in Washington. They call for stepped-up economic and political pressure on Syria and for the Soviet Union to be further estranged from Syria to make the latter amend its policies toward Israel.

According to a study entitled "Unrealizable Ambitions: Syria's Military Force and the Economic Crisis," Syria will not be able to continue building up its military strength or attaining strategic parity with Israel without massive Soviet and Saudi aid. Syria is, therefore, vulnerable to external pressure, particularly of the kind aimed at a specific goal. The study suggests Washington should bring pressure on Moscow and certain Arab capitals and make the most of the financial straits these states are experiencing to press for a cut-off in their assistance to Syria.

The study, which was prepared by Patrik Klos [name as published], a former World Bank official, and which is supported by statistics on Syria's strength and its economic crisis, contends a change of heart in Al-Asad's policy is impossible and, therefore, his ability to adopt "a rejectionist policy" should be contained. He concludes: "The best chance for the West to influence Al-Asad is to make the Soviets and some Arabs understand they must bear responsibility for the activities of the Syrian Government, which they finance."

A similar study on Soviet-Syrian military relations in the era of Gorbachev and Moscow's "new thinking" policy suggested the West should use the problems and differences that arose in the relations, specifically the military relations between Moscow and Damascus, to discourage Moscow from providing Syria with sophisticated weapons to convince Syria its policy toward Israel is unrealistic. The study, prepared by John Hana [name as published], an expert in Soviet affairs at the institute, reviews the effect of "the new thinking" on relations with Syria, particularly since the Gorbachev-Al-Asad summit in April 1987, Shevardnadze's visit to Damascus, and Moscow's reluctance to provide Syria with sophisticated military equipment and its insistence on receiving cash payments for this equipment. The study concludes the Soviet change is real and the major evidence of this is the signs of Syrian indignation. (The study cites an AL-QABAS report from Washington on 27 January 1989 on the political significance of appointing Aleksandr Zotov as Moscow's ambassador in Damascus and Zotov's role in relations between the Soviet Union and Israel.) Although the study says Moscow is not about to abandon Syria and continues to regard it an important ally, it is clear Gorbachev wants to maintain this relationship while "paying a much lower price in terms of material and political support for Syria."

The study adds even if Moscow fails to make Syria "surrender," "the new approach by Gorbachev may have important diplomatic implications the United States must acknowledge and encourage." The study

goes on to say the West must act on the basis "Moscow's strategic relations with Syria represent an admission ticket to the peace process, and that the entrance of the Soviets is linked to their readiness to sever these relations."

In his dialogue with AL-QABAS, the expert Sadawiski notes the odd irony in these ideas, "which say Syria now has become a more dangerous enemy to the United States and Israel in the Middle East, while the old prevailing idea was Syria is dangerous because of its close relations with the Soviet Union. What is strange here is he views the Soviets as the potential ally that will help force Syria to "surrender" to Israel and the United States.

Sadawiski points out Moscow no longer provides Syria with the support and protection it did in the past. He also says Moscow "will increase pressure on Syria for internal economic reasons. There is a great distance, however, between this position and coordinating pressure with U.S. policy to influence the Syrian attitude."

Sadawiski believes relations between Washington and Damascus become strained at times, and that Washington's accusations against Jibril may worsen these relations. He says: "In this case, Washington may need Moscow's help to pressure Syria. But the question is: Does Moscow have an incentive to do such a thing and link its policy on Syria with U.S. policy?"

Sadawiski says in light of the new relations between Moscow and Washington, Israel and its allies in the U.S. Government and Congress may say: In the past, one could accept the statement Washington must work to establish acceptable relations with Syria because it is a major player in the region, considering its prominent relations with the Soviet Union. This statement, however, no longer holds water in light of the drop in Soviet support to Syria and the fact Syria's central position now has been minimized; this means it became more exposed to U.S. pressure.

Contrary to what some people say, or hope—that the resumption of diplomatic ties between Syria and Cairo means a change in the Syrian position on the peace process—the official U.S. sources believe resuming ties did not come as a surprise. They also believe the trend to resume ties began at the Al-Asad-Mubarak meeting during the Islamic summit conference in Kuwait. They also believe regional factors other than the "peace process" have boosted that trend, particularly the Lebanese developments, the end of the Iraq-Iran war, and the emergence of Iraq as a player hostile to Syrian policy in Lebanon.

The U.S. sources say the improvement in Egyptian-Syrian relations "once again confirms the importance of Lebanon for Syria's policies. In the recent Arab summit, Damascus confirmed it is prepared to accept a compromise and to abandon its attempts to keep Egypt out of the Arab League, if this will preserve its influence in Lebanon."

Although the sources point out there is a connection between Syria's efforts to improve its Arab ties on the one hand, and the development in Soviet-U.S. ties and the "new Soviet thinking" in the Middle East on the other, they believe "following the end of the Gulf War, Damascus believes there no longer will be automatic Arab support for Iraq, as there was during the war. Therefore, Syria may have the opportunity to benefit from this situation and end its isolation, especially since its relations with Iran are passing through a critical phase regarding the negative Iranian role in Lebanon."

According to official sources, there are indications Syria has modified, or may be about to modify, its position on the peace process, and that Damascus is not alarmed by American efforts to promote Israeli-Palestinian talks. Neither is it disturbed by the Palestinian peace offensive, since it is counting on Shamir to abort it. Syria, however, will keep a watchful eye on the peace process.

Arab diplomatic sources well-informed about Syrian policies say Damascus realizes the resumption of ties with Cairo and its somewhat cooperative approach to American policies in Lebanon, especially abstaining from the military option, are viewed by Washington in a positive light and are thought likely to contribute to an improvement in bilateral ties and to hasten the lifting of sanctions.

Although Washington and Damascus realize the military option still is on the table, and that Syria has not ruled it out, U.S. officials think, for the moment, a military attack on 'Awn's positions is not being considered, and that Syria is coordinating with the Lebanese Government to impose a string of economic and political sanctions on the rebellious general. Military measures may be taken later by units of the Lebanese Army after being armed by Syria. According to reports received by the American State Department, U.S. sources say Syria is proposing it provide the new Lebanese Army command with tanks, personnel carriers, and possibly naval vessels. According to American and Arab sources, Syria is happy with recent political and diplomatic developments on Lebanon, particularly the recognition that President Ilyas al-Hirawi has won from the international community. Specifically cited is the importance it attaches to the recognition by France and the Vatican and the negative impact this has had on Michel 'Awn. The sources note in steering away from the military option in Lebanon, Damascus has been largely prompted by its concern not to compromise the chances of improving its relations with the West and Arab states.

Afghanistan

Najibullah Message on Afghan-Soviet Friendship

LD1601214590 Kabul Domestic Service in Pashto 1530 GMT 16 Jan 90

[Excerpts] The 30th anniversary of the founding of Afghan-Soviet friendship has been marked by the Afghanistan Peace, Friendship, and Solidarity Organization and by the Afghan-Soviet Friendship Society. It was opened by the message of esteemed Najibullah, president of Afghanistan, and read by 'Abdul Hamid Muhtat. [passage omitted]

The message of esteemed Najibullah, president of Afghanistan:

Dear friends: Allow me to congratulate you, respected members of the Afghan-Soviet Friendship Society, on the 30th anniversary of the foundation of the Afghan-Soviet society with a wish for further consolidation and expansion of Afghan-Soviet friendship. Afghan-Soviet friendship, which conforms with the interests of the people of the two countries and which has deep historic roots, is being enriched by the activities of the Afghan-Soviet Friendship Society. The Government of the Republic of Afghanistan, which considers the struggle for the realization of perpetual peace and the principle of peaceful coexistance inseparable from the struggle for the ensuring of peace in the country, spares no effort to provide all due facilities for the effective activity of the Afghan-Soviet Friendship Society. The struggle for peace, disarmament, and life in a peaceful atmosphere is the most important duty of the world's peace-loving people and social organizations. In the present situation, the world is progressing toward detente and stability in the light of the Soviet Union's new thinking, and as relations improve between East and West, the activities of the Afghan-Soviet Friendship Society should be reconstructed with new drive.

Dear friends, efforts to restore peace in Afghanistan will no doubt help the process of consolidating world peace, which has an unbreakable relation with the name and context of your society's activities. Therefore, it is necessary that all feasibilities be exploited for the restoration of peace in the country; and the relation of the Peace, Friendship, and Solidarity Organization shall further consolidate with similar organizations for the fulfilment of that desire. Afghanistan's Peace, Friendship, and Solidarity Organization has taken effective steps toward solidarity and establishing friendly relations between our people and the peoples of the world. Afghanistan's Peace, Friendship, and Solidarity Organization as a social organization shall represent well the desires and needs of the people of Afghanistan in social circles and mobilize them for the implementation of the Afghan people's wishes. The Government of the Republic of Afghanistan believes that the solution of the present difficult and complicated problems is only obtainable through negotiation and dialogue. Therefore, Afghanistan's Peace, Friendship, and Solidarity Organization shall prepare the ground for understanding dialogue and negotiation at different levels and play its role in reflecting the present realities of the country.

[Signed] Najibullah, president of Afghanistan

UN Human Rights Official Meets 'Abdul Wakil

LD1401065990 Kabul BAKHTAR in English 0415 GMT 14 Jan 90

[Text] Kabul, Jan 13, BAKHTAR—'Abdul Wakil, foreign affairs minister of the Republic of Afghanistan (RA) had a meeting on Jan 12, 1990 with Felix Armacora, special reporter of the UN Human Rights Commission in Kabul.

During the meeting, the Afghan foreign minister made outstanding the viewpoints and stand of the RA on Felix Armacora report on situation of human rights in Afghanistan which was delivered to the 3rd Commission of the 44th sessions of the UN General Assembly.

The Afghan foreign affairs minister emphasized that, reports on situation of human rights in Afghanistan should be based on present-day objective realities of the Afghan society as well as facts and figures including changes and developments taking place in Afghanistan for endurance of peace and materialization of national reconciliation policy in the country.

All measures adopted by the RA, A. Wakil adds, aimed at ensurance of peace, defence from the independence, territorial integrity national sovereignty of the RA and high interest of the Afghan people. The RA by complete and scrupulous observance of the spirit and letters of the Geneva Accords, has provided necessary facilities for the of the Afghan refuges returning home, back.

The RA repeatedly expresses its support from political solution of the Afghan issue and considers relying on military solution as completely counter to all norms and principles of human rights, 'Abdul Wakil stresses.

Reciprocally F. Armacora, while appreciating A. Wakil explanations on practical measures adopted by the RA for observance and respect of human rights in Afghanistan as well as RA's stand on peaceful and political solution of the Afghan issue, pledged that his consequence report will consist of tendency of new chapter in regard to situation and observance of human rights in Afghanistan.

F. Armacora has arrived to Kabul on Jan 12, 1990 for a working visit and was welcomed at Kabul International Airport by a number of officials of the RA Foreign Affairs Ministry.

Meets Najibullah

LD1501060790 Kabul BAKHTAR in English 0512 GMT 15 Jan 90

[Text] kabul, Jan. 14, BAKHTAR—Najibullah, president of the Republic of Afghanistan [RA] received professor Felix Armacora, special reporter of the UN Commission on Human Rights at the presidential headquarters today.

During the meeting, President Najibullah talked on the observance and respect of human rights as well as strict observance of the Geneva Accords by the RA state and expressed his deep anxiety on the continuation and expansion of interferences in the internal affairs of Afghanistan and ignoring human rights norms by the opposition. He stressed that reports on human rights situation in Afghanistan should be delivered to international community objectively.

Council of Ministers Discuss Plan, Budget

LD1601213990 Kabul Domestic Service in Pashto 1530 GMT 16 Jan 90

[Excerpts] The administrative office of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Afghanistan has reported that the regular general session of the Council of Ministers was held this afternoon at the Palace of the Council of Ministers. The session was chaired by Soltan 'Ali Keshtmand, chairman of the Executive Committee of the Council of Ministers. The deputy prime ministers, ministers, and heads of departments of the Republic of Afghanistan took part.

At this general regular session of the Council of Ministers the circumstances of the implementation of the economic plan and government budget during the 9 months of 1368 [year beginning 21 March 1989] were broadly discussed.

Regarding the positive results of work in the implementation of the plan and government budget in the 9 months of the current year, the shortcomings and defects in the work of the ministries, departments, enterprises, and institutions connected with the implementation of the envisaged duties in the plan and government budget were highlighted at this session. A resolution of the Council of Ministers in this respect assigns specific duties to the Ministries of Planning and Finance and other ministries and departments for the removal of shortcomings. [passage omitted]

Soltan 'Ali Keshtmand, chairman of the Executive Committee of the Council of Ministers, assessed the work of the session on the circumstances of the implementation of the socioeconomic plan and government budget in the 9 months of the current year. Noting the shortcomings and defects at work, he specified the duties of the ministries, departments, and enterprises for the full implementation of the envisaged objectives.

'Extremists' Fire 2 Missiles on Kabul City

LD1701163490 Kabul Domestic Service in Pashto 1530 GMT 17 Jan 90

[Text] The Pakistani-backed extremists fired two U.S.-made missiles at Kabul city today and thus perpetrated another unforgiveable crime.

BAKHTAR's military section reported that as a result of the firing of these missiles a number of our Muslim compatriots were injured and material losses resulted. These missiles were a U.S.-made cluster type which, after hitting the ground, scattered 98 antipersonnel mines. The use of such missiles is against international norms and standards, but such missiles are being used by the extremists against the populated districts of the cities in accordance with the direct instruction and state terrorism plan of the United States and Pakistan.

Rabbani, Gulbuddin Groups Clash in Faryab, Paruan

LD1601063990 Kabul BAKHTAR in English 0433 GMT 16 Jan 90

[Text] Kabul, Jan. 15, BAKHTAR—Members of the Rabbani groups attacked headquarters of the Gulbuddin groups located in the Pashtun Kowt district, Faryab Province, lately, which resulted in killing of Sayed Habibullah, ringleader of the Gulbuddin group and 4 other ringleaders were arrested by its rival group and were hanged to death before the public. The corpse of Sayed Habibullah remained in the gallows for 3 continued days.

According to another report armed clashes which took place between the Gulbuddin and Rabbani groupings in Paruan Province. Wakil, ringleader of the Gulbuddin extremist group and several other of his men were killed and a number others wounded.

Ministry Buys Weapons From Extremist Group

LD1601222290 Kabul Domestic Service in Pashto 1530 GMT 16 Jan 90

[Text] In accordance with Decree No 204 dated 10 October 1987, the Ministry of State Security recently purchased a number of weapons and ammunition from a ringleader of the Sayyaf extremist group in Paghman district.

The BAKHTAR INFORMATION AGENCY's military section reported that five surface-to-surface missiles, one heavy machinegun, 7 kg of explosives, and rocket launcher ammunition and antivehicle mines were included in these weapons and ammunition.

Personnel Seize 1 kg of Heroin at Kabul Airport

LD1301070990 Kabul BAKHTAR in English 0436 GMT 13 Jan 90

[Text] Kabul, Jan. 12, BAKHTAR—The organs of the Ministry of State Security of the country today discovered and confiscated one kg heroin in the Kabul International Airport which was due to be sent to abroad by Abdullah an Afghan passenger.

The perpetrator has been arrested and the case is under investigation.

Officials Seize 2.5 kg of Heroin at Kabul Airport

LD1401065490 Kabul BAKHTAR in English 0515 GMT 14 Jan 90

[Text] Kabul, Jan. 13, BAKHTAR—Encharges of the anti-smuggling section, General Security Police Department at the Kabul International Airport, discovered and seized 2.5 kilogrammes of heroin today.

A BAKHTAR military correspondent reported that Ganjish Singh, the smuggler has been arrested and his case is under investigation.

Bangladesh

Ershad Receives Indian High Commissioner

BK1401144890 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1430 GMT 14 Jan 90

[Text] India has conveyed to Bangladesh that it is keen to have friendly relations with all its neighbors and eager to solve any difference in a spirit of goodwill and cordiality. This view was conveyed to Bangladeshi President General Ershad when the Indian high commissioner in Bangladesh, Mr K. Srinivasan, called on him in Dhaka today. The Bangladeshi president expressed the hope that meaningful interaction between the industrial circles of the two countries may start following the visit of the Indian engineering delegation to Dhaka.

Soviet Goodwill Delegation Begins Week-Long Visit

BK1601130290 Dhaka Overseas Service in English 1230 GMT 16 Jan 90

[Text] A three-member Soviet delegation arrived in Dhaka Monday [15 January] on a week-long goodwill visit to Bangladesh. The delegation is led by Rector of Patrice Lumumba University and President of Soviet-Bangladesh Friendship Society in Moscow (Vladimir Stavin).

China To Aid Gas-Based Thermal Power Project

BK1701034490 Dhaka Domestic Service in English 0110 GMT 17 Jan 90

[Text] Bangladesh Power Development Board and China Machinery and Equipment Import and Export Corporation, CMEC, signed a contract in Dhaka yesterday to set up a 210-megawatt gas-based thermal power station at (Pahartuli) in Chittagong. The CMEC will partly provide the supply of credit on deferred payment basis covering 90 percent of the cost of the equipment and 35 percent cost of erection. The 430.25 crore taka project will be completed in December 1993 on a turnkey basis. The power station will go a long way in augmenting the capacity of the national power grid and meeting the fast growing demand of electricity in the country.

11 Border Guards Killed in Chittagong Hills

BK1301142490 Hong Kong AFP in English 1420 GMT 13 Jan 90

[Text] Dhaka, Jan 13 (AFP)—Eleven border guards including a captain were mowed down Saturday [13 January] by suspected tribal rebels in the year's first major attack in the troubled Chittagong hills of south-eastern Bangladesh, officials said.

They said all members of the Bangladesh Rifles team were killed instantly when members of the outlawed Shanti Bahini sprayed them with bullets from a hilltop in Langadu subdistrict of Rangamati district.

The patrol was on its way to a mission, the officials said without giving further details. The dead were brought to Rangamati and the insurgents escaped into the dense forests.

The Shanti Bahini rebels, drawn mainly from the Chakma tribe, have been waging a 16-year bush war for autonomy and the expulsion of thousands of Bengali-speaking Moslem settlers from the rugged region.

In the past 10 years more than 1,000 people including security personnel have been killed by the rebels, but officials have said that their activities have greatly diminished following last year's elections for specially created hill councils headed by tribal leaders.

Only a small number of insurgents continued to fight the security forces sporadically, the officials added.

The tribesmen, mostly Buddhists, are the majority in the scenic 13,000 square kilometer region comprising Rangamati and two other districts bordering India and Burma.

Dhaka Journalists Protest Ban on Publications

BK1701141190 Delhi General Overseas Service in English 1330 GMT 17 Jan 90

[Text] In Bangladesh, several hundred journalists took to the streets in the capital, Dhaka, today to protest against

the government's ban on the publication of a vernacular daily and six periodicals. Journalists holding placards and banners demanded the repeal of all the black laws—including the special powers of 1974—freedom of the press, the stoppage of press advice and repression of newspersons.

India

Gujral on Super 301 Controversy, Maldives Visit

BK1701080190 Delhi Doordarshan Television Network in English 1600 GMT 16 Jan 90

[Text] The external affairs minister, Mr Inder Kumar Gujral, has said that the country's economic interests will be fully protected while sorting out the super 301 trade controversy with the United States. Talking to newsmen on board the Indian Air Force plane while returning from his visit to the Maldives, Mr Gujral said the new government will make no compromise so far as the country's economic interests are concerned.

The foreign minister, Mr Inder Kumar Gujral, who concluded his first foreign visit since assuming office, summed up his visit to the Maldives:

[Begin recording] The major outcome of the visit is that the understanding, the friendship, and prospects of cooperation between our two countries have improved greatly. Also, a very close personal rapport has been established with the president and other members of the (?cabinet) in his country. The leadership and the people in Maldives now understand the friendly face of India, welcomes cooperation with them. Also, in the vital dimensions, the initiatives that we are taking for having a friendly cooperative South Asia, Maldives is keen to participate in that. [end recording].

Pakistani Embassy Denies Report on Sikh Training

BK1701160590 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 17 Jan 90

[Text] A Pakistan Embassy press release in New Delhi today described as utterly baseless a Wahington-datelined story claiming that Ms Benazir Bhutto had charged Mr Nawaz Sharif-led Punjab government in Pakistan with arming and training Sikh extremists. The release said Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto has neither met nor given any interview to the author of the article.

French Prime Minister Arrives on 2-day Visit

BK1801080090 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0730 GMT 18 Jan 90

[Text] The prime minister of France, Mr Michel Rocard, arrived in New Delhi this morning on a 2-day visit. He was received on arrival at Rashtrapati Bhavan [President's House] by the prime minister, Mr V.P. Singh, and his cabinet colleagues. The visiting dignitary was given an interservices guard of honor.

Speaking to newsmen, the French prime minister said that his visit coincides with the conclusion of the year-long Festival of France in India. He expressed the hope that the visit would be the beginning of an era of new relations between the two countries.

Mr V.P. Singh said that the French prime minister's visit will impart dynamism and impetus to the bilateral relations which have been growing over the last several years.

14 State Governors 'Resigned So Far'

BK1701130590 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1230 GMT 17 Jan 90

[Text] Ten more governors have resigned. They are Mr T.V. Rajeshawar of West Bengal, Mr Mohammad Usman Arif of Uttar Pradesh, Mr Sukhdev Prasad of Rajasthan, Mr Khurshid Alam Khan of Goa, Mrs Ram Dulari Sinha of Kerala, Dr P.C. Alexander of Tamil Nadu, Professor Nurul Hassan of Orissa, Mr S.K. Bhatnagar of Sikkim, Vice Admiral R.K.S. Gandhi of Himachal Pradesh, and Captain W.A. Sangma of Mizoram.

The governors submitted their resignations in response to the letters received from the president asking them to step down. With this, 14 governors have resigned so far. The governors of Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Haryana, and Nagaland had resigned yesterday.

Our Trivandrum correspondent reports that Mrs Ram Dulari Sinha has sent her resignation letter through a special messenger to New Delhi to be handed over to the president. In Tamil Nadu, Raj Bhavan [Governor House] sources said there is no change in the program of the governor, Dr Alexander, to address the assembly session tomorrow.

New Governor of Jammu, Kashmir Appointed

BK1801091390 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0830 GMT 18 Jan 90

[Text] Mr Jag Mohan has been appointed governor of Jammu and Kashmir. He is to succeed General K.V. Krishna Rao, whose resignation has been accepted by the president.

Mr Jag Mohan had earlier held this office for a number of years.

Our correspondent says that Mr Jag Mohan is known for several initiatives he took for the development of the state and for his understanding of the problems of Jammu and Kashmir. His appointment at the present juncture is indicative of the priority being given to the affairs of the state by the central government.

Karnataka Governor Sends Resignation Letter

BK1601124890 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1230 GMT 16 Jan 90

[Text] The Karnataka governor, Mr P. Venkatasubbaiah, has resigned. According to Raj Bhavan [Governor's House] sources in Banglore, Mr Venkatasubbaiah today sent his resignation letter to the president, Mr Venkataraman.

Parties Comment on Resignation of Governors

BK1701163690 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 17 Jan 90

[Excerpts] Eleven more governors have resigned on the advice of the president. They are Mr Mohammad Usman Arif of Uttar Pradesh, Mr Sukhdev Prasad of Rajasthan, Mr T.V. Rajeshwar of West Bengal, Mr Khurshid Alam Khan of Goa, Mrs Ram Dulari Sinha of Kerala, Dr P.C. Alexander of Tamil Nadu, Professor Nurul Hassan of Orissa, Mr S.K. Bhatnagar of Sikkim, Vice Admiral R.K.S. Gandhi of Himachal Pradesh, Captain W.A. Sangma of Mizoram, and Mr R.D. Pradhan of Arunachal Pradesh. The governors submitted their resignations in response to letters received from the president.

With this, 15 governors have resigned so far. The governors of Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Haryana, and Nagaland had resigned yesterday. [passage omitted]

The Congress-I has criticized the move of securing the resignation of governors. The party general secretary, Mr V.N. Gadgil, accused the National Front government of politicizing the office of governor and violating democratic principles. The governor, he said, should be above party politics and above election results.

Reacting to this, the Janata Dal general secretary, Mr Yashwant Sinha, said that the previous government flouted all norms while appointing governors, many of whom were active Congress men. Alleging that these governors indulged in politics while in office, Mr Sinha said that the new government was left with no option but to ask for their resignations when they themselves did not offer to quit, as he put it. He described the government's action as a one-time operation and hoped that such a step will not be warranted in future.

The BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] general secretary, Mr J.P. Mathur, said that the government is within its rights to ask the governors to step down. He pointed out that the decision is correct as the governor's office was misused and politicized during the Congress-I rule.

A message just received from Bombay says the Maharashtra governor, Mr K. Brahmananda Reddy, has also resigned.

Foreign Exchange Reserves Record 'Alarming' Drop

BK1201163290 Delhi Doordarshan Television Network in English 1600 GMT 12 Jan 90

[Text] India's foreign exchange reserves recorded the largest annual drop last year. The reserves fell by over 1,000 crore rupees, an alarming drop of 16.4 percent. The total reserves on hand are 5,270 crore rupees. At the existing level of foreign trade, these reserves will last for just 2 and ½ months.

Army Chief Calls for 'Careful Military Planning'

BK1401161990 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 14 Jan 90

[Text] The chief of the Army staff, General V.N. Sharma, has called for careful military planning, keeping in view the capabilities being developed in neighboring countries. He said despite the resources crunch, no laxity can be shown to the country's military preparedness. All necessary investments have to be made, whether in equipment or in the field, alongside developmental needs.

In an interview with our special correspondent, the Army chief ruled out any change in the overall role of the Indian Army despite changes in the geopolitical situation in the subcontinent.

Commenting on the recently concluded "Exercise Zarb-i-Momin" by Pakistan, the general said though every country has full rights to keep its army in readiness, the concepts involved in the exercise have to be carefully examined. When asked to compare "Zarb-i-Momin" with the Indian Army's "Operation Brass Tacks," he said the Indian exercise was not aimed at any neighbor. The Army chief agreed that the forces have been overstretched in recent years because of increasing assignments.

Home Minister Discusses Kashmir, Domestic Issues

BK1701161890 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 17 Jan 90

[Text] The union home minister, Mufti Muhammad Sayeed, has ruled out imposition of president's rule in Jammu and Kashmir, though the situation in the state is causing concern to the center. Addressing a crowded press conference in New Delhi this evening, he said the government would try all political options before considering such measures. Mr Sayeed said central intervention is not the solution to the deteriorating situation in the state as it would be the end of the road. The government has already taken some measures and has extended all its support to the Jammu and Kashmir chief minister, Dr Farooq Abdullah, to deal with the problem firmly.

Answering questions on several issues, the home minister said the central forces will continue operations in Punjab as long as hard-core elements attack innocent

people. The officials who deal with these elements firmly will not be demoralized. At the center, an effort will be made to bring all parties together if they support a solution within the Constitution of India. The question of holding assembly elections in the state does not arise as long as an atmosphere conducive to holding the poll is not there.

On the resignations of governors, Mr Sayeed said that by convention, all governors should submit their resignations soon after a new government takes over office. This is to ensure that they enjoy the confidence of the new government. With this point in view, the government had asked all the governors to tender their resignations. Some of them have already done it, and others are in the process of doing it. The new governors will be appointed soon.

On the Bodoland [separate state demanded by Bodo tribesmen of Assam] issue, the home minister said that tripartite discussions have already taken place to sort out the problem. He was hopeful that the Bodo leaders will be persuaded to give up their demand for a separate state and accept a solution within the framework of the Assam accord.

To resolve the Rama Janmabhoomi-Babri Masjid [disputed shrine] issue, he said that some measures have already been taken by the center. The government has also supported the initiative taken by some religious leaders to find out an amicable solution to the problem.

The home minister said that the government is still awaiting more information about the payoff in the Bofors gun deal. As soon as necessary information is available, an FIR [first information report] would be filed in the case.

Mr Sayeed also said that adequate steps have been taken to provide security to the AIR [All India Radio] and Doordarshan [television] staff in Srinagar in wake of some threats from terrorists.

Bomb Blasts, Arson Reported in Jammu, Kashmir

BK1701155990 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 17 Jan 90

[Text] In Jammu and Kashmir, the day curfew is being lifted in Srinagar City tomorrow. As already reported, it was lifted from Anantnag, Baramula, Sopor, and Bandipur towns yesterday.

Reports of bomb blasts and arson have, however, come in from various parts of the valley. Five bomb blasts and a few acts of arson caused partial damage to some government buildings and banks.

The chief minister, Dr Farooq Abdullah, visited different parts of Srinagar City today to assess the situation.

Iran

Khamene'i Compares Women With Western Culture

LD1701164190 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 17 Jan 90

[Address by Ayatollah Seyyed 'Ali Khamene'i to a group of female representatives of religious and educational organizations on 17 January, the eve of the birthday of Fatimah Zahra; place not given; first two paragraphs are introduction—recorded]

[Excerpts] [Announcer] Dear listeners. As we informed you earlier in this newscast, on the eve of the blessed birthday of our symbol of piety and supremacy, Her Holiness Fatimah Zahra—peace be upon her—the leader of the Islamic revolution received: sister students from Jame'at-ol Zahra religious seminary of Qom; sister instructors and students of religious teacher training institute of Qom; sister lecturers, doctors and personnel of the medical sciences university; sister students of Esfahan's al-Zahra religious seminary; sister students and instructors of teacher training centers in Chahar Mahal va Bakhtiari Province; Tehran's Martyr Shrafat; and Ahvaz's Kowsar; sister educationalists, teachers, and students from Education Ministry offices of Qazvin, Kerman, and Tehran; a group of the esteemed members of families of martyrs; POW's and MIA's from Tehran and Tabriz; a number of sister religious seminary students and sister staff of headquarters in charge of relief aid to battle fronts; sister personnel of the Basij of Islamic Revolution Guards Corps [IRGC] from Tehran and Karj and Saveh highway; model sister teachers from Mazandaran province; and a number of sister members of Friday prayers headquarters and administrative offices' Basij from Yazd township.

We end this news bulletin with the broadcast of details of remarks made by His Eminence Ayatollah Khamene'i, leader of the Islamic revolution. Good day!

[Begin recording] [chanting of slogans] [Khamene'i] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. [passage omitted] Fatimah stands at the peak of piety and calls all women of the world, inviting them to traverse on her pious path. Throughout history, whether in the old period of ignorance [jaheliyat, term refers to the state of Arab people's minds before the advent of Islam] or during the 20th century ignorance, those who have tried to belittle women—making them attached to superficial decorations, rendering them followers of fashion, clothes, make-up, gold, and jewelery, and using women as tools for life's vices—have a logic which melts like snow and ice before the heat of the sun of the spiritual character of Her Holiness Fatimah Zahra. Islam introduced Fatimah—that distinguished and supreme spiritual character—as the symbol and epitomy of women. [passage omitted]

All of us, in particular the women of our society, must be grateful to the mission and message of that great and esteemed leader; that is, our great imam and our lost

esteemed leader who with his uprising and movement and with once again highlighting Islamic values and the distinguished personalities of the early day of Islam—including Fatimah Zahra, peace be upon her—rejuvenated us, and in particular our women.

Women within the alienated society under the filthy monarchy were in all aspects oppressed. Women in our society and Iran at the time were oppressed. If women sought to enter the arena of science, they were forced to abandon their religion, piety, and chastity. It was not possible that a Muslim lady within the universities and education, scientific, and cultural centers, should be able to easily maintain her hejab [Islamic attire], modesty and good behavior. This was not possible. [passage omitted]

With the coming of Islam, revolution and the imam, women were placed at the center of political activities in this country. The emblem of revolution was left in women's hands, while at the same time women were able to safeguard their chastity, islamic attire, religion, Islamic dignity and piety. No one owes anything greater than that to Iranian Muslim women.

O, my sisters! The Western world dragged women into the arena of being commonplace. Until 60 or 70 years ago, in all of Europe and Western countries, women were merely dominated by one man or another. Women did not enjoy any rights that people enjoyed in a civilized society. They could not vote, they could not own properties, and they could not engage in trade. Then they came and dragged women into the arena of work and social life.

However, at the same time, they created all kinds of tools for women's deviation within the society. They abandoned women without any shelter. Major capitalists, filthy and devious politicians, and the managers of clandestine organs in charge of political and economic works [as heard] thought that they could utilize such a situation better, a situation where women were drawn into the arena of corruption. Yes, in those places there is science and politics, and women do advance in those areas, but at what price?

Even now the majority of women in European and American countries—countries which enjoy a lot of the Western culture—live under difficult and merciless conditions. The oppression from their husbands, or the oppression imposed on them by heavy work on their shoulders, these are all called paving the way of women for entry into society. However, these women do not even have the opportunity to think and decide.

Because of the blessing of the revolution, Iranian women were placed on an excellent path. Today, Iranian women can enter the field of science, and study for various degrees and certificates, while maintaining the personality, chastity, religion, piety, dignity and honor of a Muslim woman. Right now, among you there are so many female students, lecturers, and scientists. Women can also enter the arena of religious sciences and knowledge without obstacle. Right now, among you present here, there are numerous religious seminary students and instructors, who are engaged in education of Islamic jurisprudence and worldview. And this constitutes an issue to which our great imam gave a lot of value, and for that purpose he ordered the establishment of that institution in Qom. [passage omitted]

The whole of the Western world and Western press with their hireling writers, and agents of major world capitalists and Zionists, have all joined hands to ridicule the Islamic republic, and wage a propaganda onslaught against Islamic attire, so that they may push us out of the arena. Despite all that, Islamic Iran and Muslim women, with power, self-confidence and might, have maintained their adherence to Islamic attire, the dignity of Muslim women, and Islamic teachings about women. Today it is the Western world which is gradually becoming inclined towards Islamic attire.

Thanks to the revolution and its blessings, it became easier to start a family through marriage. This is because the formalities were curtailed and some of the obstacles removed. Do not allow everything to go back to the beginning. Fathers and mothers should not be strict and rigorous on unnecessary provisions for the marraige of their children; for the younger generation are not so strict about marriage. Allow the marriage go through in accordance with Islamic regulations. Allow the young girls and young women who live in the Islamic environment to marry in the same style as Fatimah al-Zahra. That is, a marriage with the knot of spiritual and divine love. [passage omitted]

My sisters should realize that today the world is moving towards Islam. This is not a slogan, it is a fact. You see today that our brothers in the same region of Azerbaijan, the territory of the Soviet Union, are showing so much enthusiasm for Islam. If one were to think or pretend that the motive behind these movements is ethnic and involving national sentiments, he would be making a big mistake. These sentiments are Islamic zeal; and the leaders of the USSR should realize this matter with realistically also, that these sentiments are Islamic sentiments and, therefore, have appeal to one billion Muslims, lest the response against these sentiments be a wrong and novice [nashi] approach.

The Soviet leadership, by reappraising the old methods, showed admirable bravery; and today the nations can demonstrate their belief and faith and their spiritual, heartfelt and religious desire; and these Muslim brothers, who were forcefully kept apart from Islam for a period of over 70 years, are again returning to Islam and are showing their Islamic feelings. We value and appreciate these Islamic sentiments, lest, through incorrect analysis, the Soviet authorities respond harshly and improperly to these Islamic sentiments.

This is Islam. Islam cannot be extinguished. Islam is neither aggressive nor oppressive. Islam commands observance of justice and fairness. Islamic society all over the world is in love with justice and fairness. The

way of treating Muslims all over the world is through justice and fairness; and this is the great Islamic goal. Praise be to God, today Islam is shining bright all over the world, all the Islamic ideas including those related to women. May Almighty God grant us the success to understand Islam properly; and I recommend to you, Muslim and revolutionary women, to increase your Islamic knowledge and understanding as far as you can and wherever you are. [passage omitted] [end recording]

You can see that women and Muslims in various countries, whether in Islamic countries, where there was no sign of the hijab—they were drowning in Western teaching—or even in European countries, are turning to the hijab; Muslims first, of course. We saw that very distant countries, which were under the influence and the enchantment of Western and European culture, after the victory of the revolution, began experimenting with hijabs in the style of the hijab of you Iranian women; they had turned to it and are turning to it. That is the progress you have made.

Religious women in our society must try to appreciate the value of the Iranian Muslim woman. Know the value of an Islamic and Muslim woman! The woman who does not mix with men in social situations and contacts, who does not consider herself to be an instrument for attracting a man's eyes, who considers herself to be above that sort of thing; a woman who considers her dignity to be too dear to leave herself uncovered and to draw the eyes of passers-by to herself with her face, her hair and her steps and to provoke their desire; a woman who considers herself above that sort of thing; a woman who considers herself to be on the foothills of that peak at the top of which stands Fatimah Zahra, the greatest women in the history of humankind—that woman is an Iranian Muslim woman. Such a woman must turn away from and shun the playthings brought about by Western civilization and the conspiratorial Western behavior.

Under the former regime, a large number of women were uneducated, ignorant about social matters—that is, they were not allowed to be aware—were uninterested in the fate of the country and did not imagine that women could be involved in the destiny of the country; despite all that, from the point of view of pseudo-European appearance, they at times surpassed Western and European women. When one looked at them, one would think that she has just arrived in Iran from a European country and from a Western environment. If you spoke two words to her, you would see that she was an uneducated woman, or a woman with very little education. Weakness of character in women compelled here to create a false personality for herself by means of immodesty and attracting attention.

That was a regression for women; it was not progress. Occupying a woman with makeup, fashion, immodesty, clothes, gold, and ornaments and using her as an instrument and a tool for various aims, not allowing her to enter politics, morality and education—can a greater crime than that be committed against women? That is what was done under the former regime, in a calculated and pre-planned way.

The revolution occured and it altered the behavior of women and the direction of the movement of our country's women by 180 degrees; turning their backs to that direction and their faces towards light, towards development, towards the scientific, ethical, and political arena and towards presence on scenes, towards the development of human personalities; becoming beneficial for society, in the true sense. Be careful [words indistinct]

Today, becoming occupied with decorations and ornaments is blameworthy for a revolutionary Iranian Muslim woman. Today, covering the head, chest, and hands with ornaments; making ornaments, makeup, fashion and clothes one's idols is a disgrace for a revolutionary Iranian Muslim woman. A person who is after such things has low value. Gold does not give worth to a woman; ignoring gold gives worth. Fashion does not give worth to a woman; ignoring entrapping fashions created by enemies gives worth to a woman. The Muslim woman has found her personality. Beware not to lose that personality!

Khamene'i Comments on Woman's Role in Science

LD1601174190 Tehran IRNA in English 1530 GMT 16 Jan 90

[Text] Tehran, Jan. 16, (IRNA)—Women in Iran, especially those who stride the scientific fields within the framework of Islam, particularly hejab (Islamic code of dressing), should make their counterparts in the world known that learning sciences does not mean leading a loose life, remarked the leader of the Islamic revolution today.

Ayatollah Seyyed 'Ali Khamene'i speaking to a group of lady doctors on the threshold of the birth anniversary of the prophet's (PBUH) [peace be upon him] daughter Fatema Az-Zahra (PBUH), said that the humanitarian side of the female has been clouded by propaganda and political and economic issues in the West.

'However, Islam calls on women to flower in the intellectual and political areas, and especially in scientific fields, so that their presence has the maximum benefit for the society,' he said.

Today, despite all the hue and cry in Europe on the status of women, noted the leader, they (Europeans) are quite misconceived in this regard.

He said, ever since Europe became aware of women's status long after other nations, it thinks this retardation can be made up through mere propaganda ballyhoo. But its understanding is wrong since it ignores the humanitarian aspects of women, he added.

'In Islam, we believe that in any healthy society women are able and should find the opportunity to play a role in

scientific, social and reconstruction efforts, and assume responsibilities in this respect,' said the ayatollah.

He said as far as Islam is concerned, there is no difference between the two sexes and the purpose behind the creation of each human being is to reach the lofty humanitarian values and take the maximum advantage of their respective talents.

'A clear example is Hazrat Fatema (PBUH), who reached the pinnacle of humanity,' said the leader referring to the prophet's (PBUH) daughter who is regarded as the perfect model for Muslim women.

On hejab and the misconception about it, he said hejab does not obstruct political, scientific and social activities of women 'and the obvious proof are you yourself (lady doctors).'

'It might be surprising for some to see that there are highly qualified women who have adjusted themselves to Islamic teachings particularly hejab,' added Ayatollah Khamene'i.

In addition to those who mocked at the hejab through their incorrect, attitudes, there were some supposedly logical persons for whom it was hard to believe that a hejab-clad woman can pass higher educational levels, he said.

Deputy Culture Minister on Tourism, Baku Flights

NC1801091290 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 0430 GMT 18 Jan 90

[Text] Mr Haji, the deputy minister of Islamic culture and guidance for tourism affairs, has announced the ministry's complete readiness to accept passengers and tourists from neighboring countries, and especially from the southern Soviet republics sharing common borders with Iran.

IRNA reports that Mr Haji added that all the facilities and installations of this ministry as well as the facilities of other state and private organs have been prepared to welcome these visitors.

Speaking about visas for the visitors, he said: The ministry has introduced the necessary arrangements for this. There is also no problem as far as foreign currency exchange is concerned because the necessary coordination has been carried out with the Central Bank.

Stating that steps are being taken to establish an air link between Tehran and Baku, he said: These dear ones can have the choice of an air link, train, or passenger buses to travel to Iran.

Soviet Tourists Welcome; Baku Air Link Planned

LD1801094190 Tehran IRNA in English 0610 GMT 18 Jan 90

[Text] Tehran, Jan. 18, IRNA—Iran is fully prepared to receive tourists from neighbouring countries, particularly from Soviet southern republics, said an official here Wednesday [17 January].

All necessary facilities for reception of tourists have been provided by the Ministry of Culture and Islamic guidance and by other governmental and private organisations, the ministry's deputy for tourism and pilgrimage affairs Morteza Haji told IRNA.

On issuance of visas for such tourists, he explained that arrangements have been made by the Foreign Ministry adding that they can exchange currencies with no obstacle as necessary measures have been taken by the Iranian Central Bank.

An air link connecting Tehran and Baku, the capital of the Soviet Azerbaijan Republic, will be established soon in the framework of the recent negotiations conducted between the two countries, Haji disclosed.

The passengers can also travel to Iran through other air routes, or by train or coach, he said.

Dailies Show Concern over Soviet Azerbaijan

LD1801094790 Tehran IRNA in English 0730 GMT 18 Jan 90

[Text] Tehran, Jan. 18, IRNA—The Persian daily ABRAR in its editorial Thursday expressed hope that the Soviet Government will handle the situation in the Azerbaijan Republic tactfully and prudently.

The daily recalled the words of the leader of the Islamic Republic Ayatollah Khamanei to a group of visiting people in Tehran Wednesday [17 January] in relation with the situation in the Soviet Azerbaijan hoping that the soviets would be receptive to the religious feelings of the masses in that republic.

ABRAR said for about 70 years Islam has been oppressed by the ruling Marxism in the Soviet Union, and that in view of the expression of Muslim sentiments in such remote areas as Western Europe and the United States, it is now no wonder that Muslims in a neighboring republic of Iran should show their rising sentiments for Islam.

The editorial somewhat deplored the deployment of Soviet forces in the Soviet Republic of Azerbaijan this week as a development potentially capable of gradually changing the situation in that republic into a tinder box ready for big explosion at a future time.

The article said any indiscreet handling of the situation by the Soviet Government may very well rouse one billion sympathetic Muslims throughout the world.

In another editorial on the same topic the Persian daily JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI expressed concern about the deployment of military troops in the Republic of Azerbaijan, but at the same time expressed hope that Moscow will act with a reasonable degree of self-reservation,"as it so far has," in coping with the expression of religious sentiments of rising Muslims in Azerbaijan Republic whose people share identical language, religion and culture with its neighboring province in Iran.

JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI commented that on the surface it is likely that the arrival to the republic of Soviet troops presages "the advent of a new era of suppression of Muslims and imposition of fresh restrictions against followers of religions in the Soviet Union."

The daily observed that it is in the interest of the Soviet Government to endeavor to promote religious and civil freedoms for the peoples of the Soviet Union.

53 Iraqi POW's Released, Fly Home

LD1701113390 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 17 Jan 90

[Excerpt] The Central News Unit reports that on the birthday of her Holiness Fatimah Zahra, the lady of Islam—peace be upon her—the Islamic Republic of Iran released 53 sick and disabled Iraqi military POW's.

Following the request of the UN secretary general to the foreign minister, and in the wake of humanist moves by the Islamic Republic of Iran, the 53 this morning left Tehran for Iraq on an International Red Cross aircraft, amid a farewell ceremony attended by the supervisor and staff from the commission in charge of Iraqi POW's affairs, as well as clerics and members of the Supreme Assembly of Islamic Revolution in Iraq (SAIRI).

According to the same report, during the release of the POW's—all of whom are military personnel—three of them sought political asylum in the Islamic Republic of Iran. It is noteworthy that so far 1,540 Iraqi POW's have been released, whereas Iraq has only released 949 people, half of whom were civilians. [passage omitted]

Iraq Releases 20 POW's; Policy Condemned

LD1801113190 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 18 Jan 90

[Excerpts] Twenty sick and disabled Iranian prisoners of war [POW's] released by the Iraqi regime arrived in Tehran at noon today. They were welcomed at Mehrabad Airport by officials from the commission in charge of Iranian POW's and other officials. [passage omitted]

Mr Aqamiri, the official in charge of the commission of Iranian POW's commented on the return of the POW's.

[Begin Aqamiri recording] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. Today we witness the return of 20 of our dear POW's, and we witness their presence on the Islamic Republic of Iran's territory. Such a move by the Iraqi regime shows that the Iraqi regime does not adhere to what it proclaims about the release of sick and disabled POW's. Last week it announced that it was ready to release all sick and disabled POW's, but of course, it added some extra conditions. However, the move of the Iraqi regime in releasing 20 people against our 50 blocks the way for continuation of such activities. Unfortunately, the moves made by the Iraqi regime show that it remains unwilling to release POW's, and that it constantly creates obstacles concerning this issue. [passage omitted] [end recording]

Besharati Interviewed on Peace Talks With Iraq

NC0901110290 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 0655 GMT 9 Jan 90

[Report on interview with Deputy Foreign Minister Mohammad 'Ali Besharati by unidentified correspondent; from the "Voice of the Front" feature]

[Excerpt] [Announcer] When one reviews the behavior of the Iraqi Ba'thist leadership after the acceptance of Resolution 598 and the establishment of the cease-fire on the war fronts, as well as its positions, proposals, and plans before all rounds of talks on the matter, one can clearly see that the Baghdad leaders are not only not thinking of establishing peace and ending their misdeeds in the region, but they also want to protract the situation of neither war nor peace. To this end, they propound unprincipled and illogical demands so that they can, first of all, discredit Resolution 598 and gradually render it ineffective; and second, fulfill some of their expansionist ambitions and thus show the world of arrogance that they did indeed gain something from their bloody and imposed war after all.

Even if we ignore the adventures and crimes perpetrated by the Iraqi Ba'thists during the 8 years of war and only look at their positions during the four rounds of peace talks, we can easily see that the Iraqi leaders did not have any say in the policies that were adopted and that they lack a consistent stand. The recent proposals by Iraqi officials on the exchange of disabled prisoners of war, the opening of borders for Iranian and Iraqi pilgrims, and the continuation of the talks in Tehran and in Baghdad are, as was pointed out by the Iranian representative in the United Nations, for propaganda purposes only and aimed at misleading public opinion. Even though the Iranian people and officials agree with the goals of the recent proposals on the exchange of disabled prisoners of war and the opening of borders for pilgrims to holy shrines, nevertheless the two countries' borders, as delineated in the 1975 Algiers agreement, must be officially recognized and the aggressive Iraqi forces withdrawn. It is only after these first steps are taken that opening the borders and exchanging prisoners of war, a point which appears as a subsequent step in the resolution, can be discussed.

We interviewed Mr Besharati, our esteemed deputy foreign minister, on Iraq's insistence on illogical policies and expansionist designs:

[Begin recording] [Correspondent] We thank you for giving some of your time to this program. The behavior of Iraqi officials during the peace talks indicates that Iraq intends to continue its expansionist objectives. What policies, in your opinion, should be adopted by the Islamic Republic of Iran to help achieve a rapid and precise implementation of the resolution?

[Besharati] There are some points that should be considered in relation to our talks with the Iraqis on Resolution 598 under the supervision of the UN secretary general. The first point is that Iraq approached the negotiations from a position different from ours. Iraq thought it had scored significant military victories on the fronts and would thus have the upper hand in the talks. However, the talks themselves revealed this was not correct. The second point is that the Iraqi regime never believed in peace, even when it made peace proposals during the war. This is because its mission throughout the 8-year war was to defeat the Islamic revolution. If it were unable to defeat the revolution, then it wanted to see that Khuzestan was divided; and if it was unable to divide Khuzestan, then it was to fulfill its designs on the Arvand River. During the war Iraq was unable to achieve any of these three objectives which it had promised to the nation, the army, the superpowers, and reactionary regimes. Therefore, everyone realized that it was not serious about peace.

We realized this in the first and second round of the talks. During the first round of talks we thought that both delegations wanted to assess each other. However, we realized that the Iraqis did not take the talks seriously at all.

We, however, take the talks very seriously. We are thinking of peace. In the same way that the world witnessed our 8 years of sacred defense, it is now witnessing our efforts for reconstruction. We reconstructed our most vulnerable industrial point, the Abadan refinery, before anything else to show that we are serious about peace. Naturally, we continue to think about the peace talks and we hope the Iraqi regime will realize it will gain nothing from protracting the tension and the situation of neither war nor peace, especially as the regional countries are extremely upset about this situation. They realize that if one day, God forbid, the war is rekindled, then this time their economic interests will also suffer.

Generally speaking, there is no possibility the war will be flare up again and Iraq has no choice but to agree to the precise implementation of the resolution and to withdraw from 2,000 km of our territory.

Of course, there is a great possibility that our tensions with Iraq will subside and world arrogance may try, from now on, to solve Iraq's problems in view of the bitter test it faced in this war and the fact that the Iraqi regime failed to fulfill the wishes of world arrogance. Iraq is a vulnerable country. It is surrounded on every side—by us, by Turkey, by Syria, by Jordan, by Saudi Arabia, and by Kuwait. It is landlocked. Its economy has been significantly weakened and it amassed a foreign debt of $300 billion during the 8-year war. It suffered 500,000 deaths, 2 million wounded, and 10 damaged cities. Furthermore, it has an obscure philosophy and ideology which do not inspire confidence from world arrogance. We should recall that before the war, the Iraqi regime considered the Saudi regime the most reactionary Arab regime and had claims to territory in the Persian Gulf's Arab states. It continues to claim 50 percent of Kuwaiti territory. World arrogance cannot invest in this regime in the long run. It is quite likely that Iraq will have to give in at the talks and withdraw from our territory because of various factors, especially the high morale of the Islamic Republic and our unflinching determintion. [end recording] [passage omitted]

Commentary Discusses U.S. Relations With Iraq

LD1401193990 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1104 GMT 14 Jan 90

[Station commentary]

[Text] The visit by a U.S. delegation, including two senators, to Baghdad has raised a number of questions about U.S. relations with Iraq: the aim of the delegation's visit and the topics discussed by the delegation and Saddam last night, which have not been disclosed.

Although since 1982—8 years ago when Baghdad and Washington resumed relations after 18 years—the holding of such discussions appears to be normal, new developments in Baghdad and problems which exist in the way of the expansion of such relations, can make the outcome of new official contacts between Baghdad and Washington very important.

It was announced last week that Saddam and Shah Husayn possibly escaped an assassination attempt. The caravan accompanying them to the presidential palace was involved in a number of suspicious accidents and the car carrying Saddam and Shah Husayn was driven towards the pavement.

Neither received serious injuries as a result of that suspicious accident, but the sacrifice of dozens of sheep as a sign of Saddam and Shah Husayn being safe and sound and Baghdad's silence about the accident, showed how dangerous and serious it was. In that assassination attempt, Saddam's daughter and nephew were injured by machine-gun bullets, on which no further information is available.

On the other hand, according to informed sources, it was announced last week that a large number of arrests was made in Baghdad mainly among the regime's opposition. The visit of the U.S. delegation coinciding with those reports, first of all, introduces the possibility that the most important goal of the visit of the U.S. delegation is

to appraise the stability of Saddam's regime, particularly as such appraisals are quite important for the U.S. Government. Furthermore, the position of Saddam's regime is considered important to the U.S. Government because of Saddam's enmity towards the Islamic Republic of Iran. The internal developments in Iraq can also arouse Washington's serious concern because of the important role the Iraqi regime plays in U.S. foreign policy.

Although the imposed war has ended following the announcement of the cease-fire, Washington is still particular about safeguarding the Iraqi regime's position, and in its regional policies the United States tries to emphasize the role of Iraq. Two years ago, following the genocide of the Kurds by the Iraqi regime with chemical weapons, some protests were made in the U.S. Congress and the Senate which appeared in the form of a call to boycott Iraq.

Following pressure from the Reagan administration, the strength of those calls was reduced in two stages and it finally was approved in the form of a technical boycott or withholding credit facilities.

Although, according to Western observers, that blockade resulted in the United States' not playing a major role in the reconstruction of Iraq, it is Washington's policy to eliminate gradually that blockade and expand its relations with Baghdad.

According to high-ranking U.S. officials, the Bush administration intends to remove that blockade within the next few weeks in order to defend U.S. interests. But before such action could be taken and the relations between the two countries could be improved, it appears that the Americans want a definite assessment of Iraq and to be informed of Iraq's internal events and affairs.

Involvement in Congo Plane Crash Denied

AB1701172390 London BBC World Service in English 1615 GMT 17 Jan 90

[From the "Focus on Africa" program]

[Text] A television program shown in Congo Brazzaville has not pleased the Iranians. The program points a finger at Iran as being behind the plane crash disaster in Niger 4 months ago. The airliner, which started its journey in Brazzaville, went down with the loss of all lives on board. From Brazzaville, Antoine Moyembala telexed this report:

[Begin studio announcer recording] The Iranian Embassy in Brazzaville has reacted strongly against the accusation that Iran might have financed the criminal destruction of the DC-10 plane. This denial follows the official television station's rebroadcasting of the story from French TV, according to which two members of the pro-Iranian Hezbollah Movement might have been responsible for the attack on the French plane. The explosive device, according to the TV program, was probably put aboard at Brazzaville and exploded whilst the aircraft was over the desert after a stop in Chad. The aeroplane belonged to the French airline, UTA, and the crash resulted in the death of all 171 passengers and crew. It is believed that the crash was the result of a bomb aboard the aircraft.

According to the communique issued by the Iranians, they said that such accusations as those made on Congo TV were an attempt to prevent victory by the oppressed people of the world. The communique repeated the Iranian condemnation of the bombing and said that according to the holy law of Islam, all Iranians must reject all violence against innocent people. [end recording]

Pakistani Assembly Speaker Arrives in Tehran

LD1701125490 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 17 Jan 90

[Text] Malik Merajk Khalid, speaker of Pakistan's National Assembly, arrived in Tehran at noon today leading a delegation. He was welcomed by the Majles speaker, by deputies, and by officials from our country's Foreign Ministry.

Our correspondent reports that the Pakistani National Assembly speaker said upon arriving in Tehran: During this visit, in addition to holding talks on expanding and strengthening ties between the two countries, we will also benefit from the parliamentary experience of Islamic Iran because its experience can prove very useful and effective.

For his part, Majles Speaker Karrubi said: During the visit, efforts will be made to establish parliamentary links between the two countries and to discuss border issues, and the issues of Palestine and Afghanistan.

Meets With Karrubi

LD1701184190 Tehran Television Service in Persian 1600 GMT 17 Jan 90

[Text] Mr Malik Meraj Khalid, the speaker of Pakistan's National Assembly, arrived in Tehran today heading a delegation at the invitation of Mr Karrubi, the speaker of the Majles, and was welcomed by Mr Karrubi and a number of deputies of the Majles and officials of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of our country.

After arriving in Tehran, the speaker of Pakistan's National Assembly said: During this visit, in my talks with the officials of the Islamic Republic of Iran about the expansion and strengthening of Iran-Pakistan relations, we will benefit from the parliamentary experiences of Islamic Iran because these experiences can be very useful [as heard].

In an interview with our reporter, Mr Karrubi, the Majles speaker, also said: In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful, our listeners, viewers and our people are no doubt aware that we have many joint

benefits and unbreakable bonds with Pakistan. We share the same borders, we are neighbors, we share the same beliefs and religion, we have many cultural, economic and social relations. This is the first point. The second point is that we always wished to establish parliamentary relations. Therefore, we formed a friendship society with Pakistan, and that was the first group that we formed. On the same basis, we invited the esteemed speaker of their Assembly and some of their deputies to come, so that we can increase our parliamentary links and contacts and so that we may become linked together in all our regional issues. It is natural that in connection with future discussions and talks which we shall have we shall discuss all issues. The issues of Palestine Afghanistan will be discussed. Our border issues will be discussed. Our political and economic issues will be discussed, as well as other different issues that we have. Especially in view of the affection and attachment which the people of Afghanistan have toward the Islamic revolution and toward Iran and in view of the strong affection which the Iranian people have toward the Pakistani nation, these relations will certainly strengthen and expand our relations and will be very useful for the entire region and the people and for the solution of Afghanistan issues and others.

Velayati Meets With Japanese Official

LD1701181390 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1630 GMT 17 Jan 90

[Text] In this morning's meeting between the director of the Japanese Foreign Ministry's Middle East Department and Mr Velayati, our country's foreign minister, regional and international issues were discussed.

According to a Central News Unit report, in that meeting Mr Velayati pointed to the Iraqi regime's obstacles to implementing Security Council resolution 598. He further sought an active Japanese role lending support to that resolution's implementation. Moreover, he stressed greater expansion of bilateral political and economic relations, as well as the necessity of exchanging high-ranking delegations between the two countries.

Saudis Warned Against Aiding 'Wahhabi' Groups

PM1001165390 Tehran KEYHAN in Persian 4 Dec 89 p 3

[Correspondent's report from Zahedan]

[Text] Ayatollah Jannati, in charge of the Islamic Propagation Organization, has warned the Saudi regime against the actions of Wahhabi elements in the area of Sistan va Baluchestan.

In an interview, the head of the Islamic Propagation Organization gave details on plans to foil the plots and activities of the condemned Wahhabi faction in the area. He said: The criminal United States has brought in some broadcasters and writers who pretend to be wise in order to fight pure Islam. These people are Wahhabis and represent the United States. They want to promote American culture in this area.

We have adequate information to show that these elements are cooperating with the Saudi regime to carry out plots against Islam in the area. Our official are fully aware of the situation and are in the process of taking some actions in this regard.

He added: If someone wants to promote Islam in their country, they can go as far as capital punishment and they can execute the promoter of Islam. But in doing so they themselves carry out some actions which do not match anyone's principles and which are not even permitted by international law.

They should know that the Islamic Republic of Iran will have nothing to do with them. The Al Sa'ud elements should now that, if they have not been dealt with seriously so far, it is only out of Islamic compassion, because we are Muslims. That is why we have not dealt with them, but this situation will not last long. We hope that these types do nothing to provoke our people to retaliate against them, because then even the officials will not be able to stop the masses.

Release of 'Egyptian Mercenaries' Planned

LD1601141190 Tehran IRNA in English 1325 GMT 16 Jan 90

[Excerpt] Tehran, Jan. 16, IRNA—A senior Iranian official today announced that some Egyptian mercenaries captured by Iran in the war with Iraq would soon be released through the mediation to a Muslim alim. He did not mention his name or nationality.

Mohammad Ali Nazaran, head of the commission in charge of Iraqi POWs added that 'if the Cairo government extends an official request for the release of its POWs, the Islamic Republic would study it.'

Speaking to reporters, Nazaran said Iran has so far delivered to the International Committee of the Red Cross 1,490 sick and disabled war prisoners in 21 stages. The released included some Egyptian, Sudanese, Somalian and Lebanese nationals he said.

'But the Baghdad regime has released only 949 Iranian POWs including 456 civilians,' he said.

He described the Iraqi president's recent proposal that all war prisoners taken captive up to 1982 be swapped as a 'move to deceive world public opinion and to ease his internal pressure.' [passage omitted]

Commentary Assails Foreign Ministry's Mistakes

NC1101155890 Tehran KEYHAN in Persian 26 Dec 89 p 18

['Ali Yusefi commentary: "Playing With a Checkmated King"]

[Text] The sensitivity shown recently by the people, the Majles deputies, and the press toward the visit by the overthrown Romanian ruler to Iran is a healthy phenomenon stemming from the people's concern for the Islamic Republic's position and prestige in the world. The historic letter of the imam, may his soul rest in peace, to Mr Gorbachev, and that great man's forecast about communism gave the Islamic Republic great credibility in the world. And even though fate did not allow the imam to see his predictions materialize, Iran has been recorded as the first to foresee the tempest that has started in the Eastern bloc during the past few months and which has brought about great changes. However, the irreparable mistake committed in welcoming and hosting the deposed president of Romania gave the enemies of the Islamic revolution the best pretext to aim their venomous propaganda again at the sacred face of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

The question is: Should not our foreign policy officials have correctly assessed the international situation and domestic situation of certain countries.

Knowing that the raging flood that hit the Eastern bloc would sooner or later engulf Mr Ceausescu also was not very difficult. Why were we unable to understand this and why did we begin to play with a king that had already been checkmated?

Today foreign policymakers not only try to clarify precisely the domestic developments in countries through various analyses, but they also try to use every means possible to inplement their own national objectives and interests in those countries. Undoubtedly, the people and officials, aware of all the difficulties and obstacles faced by the young organs of the country's diplomacy, do not expect this organ to play a trend-setting role in the domestic affairs of countries. At the same time, however, one cannot accept that we turn a blind eye to the complicated processes that govern relations among countries.

Even though we can always hope that this will be the "last mistake," a brief glance at the activities of the officials in charge of foreign policy shows that we should not be optimistic. The main problems in each and every case are first, everyone blames someone else, and second, the wrongdoer is never reprimanded. Thus everyone feels he is immune, and this in itself is the prologue to future mistakes. It seems, therefore, that at least in this case the people who, with their incorrect assessments of the developments in Romania, paved the way for Ceausescu's trip should be reprimanded. Naturally, blaming one person is not fair because the Foreign Ministry is an immense body of experts that is expected to place the latest analyses of international developments at the disposal of the country's officials. If a defect exists, therefore, then fundamental changes in the Foreign Ministry cadre are necessary because mere moral advice cannot prevent future mistakes.

Let us remember that if we ourselves are not ready to learn from our mistakes, then certainly our enemies will make the most of this lapse.

The world of politics is a complicated world that seizes opportunities. One cannot walk around looking through rose-colored glasses thinking that one is immune to incidents.

Also, let us remember that humans are mortal but that history will judge their acts very carefully. We must not permit our mistakes to mar the sacred face of the Islamic revolution for future generations.

Commentary on Deputies' Letter to Khamene'i

NC1101201390 Tehran JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI in Persian 4 Jan 90 pp 1, 3

[Unattributed commentary from the "Weekly Political Analysis" entitled: "The Position of the Majles on Strengthening the System"]

[Text] By signing a letter addressed to Ayatollah Khamene'i, the leader of the revolution, this week, the deputies of the Majles once again asserted their allegiance and support for the vice regency of the supreme jurisconsult. Some Majles deputies put questions to the foreign minister and invited him to the Majles to answer them. The questions concerned recent events in Romania and the reason for the lack of attention to the critical situation in that country while the visit by the Romanian president to Iran was being organized.

In the Islamic Republic's system, which arose from the masses of the martyr-nurturing nation, the Majles is the essence of the system and is second only to the leader; it is at the helm in all matters. Naturally, it has the right to probe into the details of the country's affairs. One of the most natural actions on the part of the deputies in the past decade has been to put questions to ministers. This accentuates not only the seriousness of a particular issue but also the alertness of the deputies.

Most of the Majles deputies exercised their natural right within the framework of strengthening the system and asked for more information about the Foreign Ministry's assessment of the Romanian situation and the reasons for Ceausescu's visit to Iran under such conditions. At the same time, the Majles deputies sent a letter with 217 signatures to the office of the leader of the revolution to pre-empt any misconstruction of the situation by the enemies of the Islamic revolution, and possibly some individuals at home, who may be discontented with the present state of affairs.

In the letter they reaffirmed their support and allegiance to the supreme jurisconsult in this connection. This measure will serve to prevent attempts of any kind to capitalize on the situation by the enemies of the Islamic Republic of Iran and some discontented persons.

Daily Welcomes Visit by Human Rights Delegation

LD1701102190 Tehran IRNA in English 0735 GMT 17 Jan 90

[Text] Tehran, Jan. 17, IRNA—The English daily 'TEHRAN TIMES' Wednesday welcomed an imminent visit to Iran of a human rights delegation saying that it will foil enemies' plots.

A human rights delegation led by U.N. Human Rights Commission representative Reynaldo Galindo Pohl is to arrive here Saturday at the invitation of Iran's permanent representative to the United Nations Kamal Kharrazi.

In its editorial, the daily lauded the initiative as the best way to neutralise baseless propaganda by Western media and enemies of the Islamic Revolution including the outlawed monafeqin [hypocrite] grouplet (MKO) [Mojahedin-e Khalq Organization].

"This investigation should be a totally independent human rights study never allowing the enemies to use human rights organisation as a means to pressure Iran," the English daily said.

It also expressed hope that Pohl would scrutinise each and every case completely before reaching any conclusions.

The editorial referred to the different versions of human rights in the West and in the Islamic context saying, "The difference... should be taken up by all those interested to investigate the case."

It referred to West's handling of the Salman Rushdi's blasphemous book 'The Satanic Verses' in which protests by one billion Muslim community was labelled as a violation of the human rights while the open U.S. attack on Panama last month was justified "under the protection of a peculiar concept of human rights that can stretch enough to always fit their own diabolic designs."

"If the world accepts the Western human rights version, it has to meekly and myopically also yield in to Western hegemony across the globe," concluded the daily.

Khamene'i Meets Oppressed Foundation Officials

LD1001121890 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 10 Jan 90

[Text] His Eminence Ayatollah Khamene'i, leader of the Islamic revolution, this morning received Mr Rafiqdust, head of the foundation for the Oppressed and the Selfless Devotees [janbazan], together with a group of officials, deputies, and supervisors from the Foundation's provincial centers.

In that meeting, the leader of the world's oppressed Khamene'i stressed that paying attention to the conditions of the oppressed and the selfless devotees brings about a spiritual reward in the life after death [ajr-e okhravi]. Such an issue also places a great responsibility on the shoulders of you, officials from the Foundation for the Oppressed and the Selfless Devotees. He graciously said: All your abilities and efforts should be devoted to ensuring that the foundation's resources are spent in the best possible way for the affairs of those two deprived social groups.

President Meets Construction Jihad Officials

LD1501040490 Tehran Television Service in Persian 1600 GMT 14 Jan 90

[Text] Mr Foruzesh, the Construction Jihad minister, accompanied by deputies and heads of provincial jihad offices and officials from the representative bureau of the leader, as well as directors of affiliated companies were received by President Hashemi-Rafsanjani today.

In the meeting, Mr Hashemi-Rafsanjani referred to the outstanding record of the sacred Construction Jihad Foundation and to the ongoing discussions in the government and the Majles toward clarifying the Construction Jihad's main mission. He said: The official domain of jihad will be designated soon, and in light of the variety of expertise and potential possessed by construction jihad forces, they must not be confined to the jihad ministry. The structure must be such that they are able to undertake large-scale implementational tasks in the course of the 5-year developmental plan.

Mr Hashemi-Rafsanjani added: Planning for an increased presence abroad, especially in Islamic countries, must be considered one of the Construction Jihad's other main responsibilities and a department must be established in the jihad to train forces for that purpose.

Mr Hashemi-Rafsanjani also stressed the need for the Construction Jihad to pay attention to cultural affairs.

Hashemi-Rafsanjani Views Agricultural Issues

LD1601135090 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 16 Jan 90

[Excerpt] Model farmers, livestock breeders, orchard keepers and extension workers from various regions of the country were introduced to President Hashemi-Rafsanjani during ceremonies today. In these ceremonies, the president said: Farming is the country's most essential economic activity. By producing more, in addition to achieving self-sufficiency, Iran can export its farm products to other countries.

The president pointed out: The 5-year plan has paid particular attention to agriculture, and this policy is in the interest of the government, the people, the country, and the revolution. We are striving to implement this plan. When we see that the model farmers can produce four to five times more than other farmers, we come to the conclusion that our country has the potential to produce more.

Referring to the need to expand the area under cultivation by using new farming techniques, the president said:

No doubt, if we were to use our water resources properly and prevent irrigation water losses through evaporation in fields and wastage in irrigation canals, we could make better use of our land and water resources, in view of the country's particular climatic conditions and large area of cultivable land.

The president stressed: The Ministries of Agriculture and Construction Jihad are dutybound to put better services at your disposal. Application of science and the use of the world's scientific achievements is a must today, and we must make use of the agricultural experience gained in the world. For instance, we must expand the technology of sprinkler irrigation.

Referring to the links between agriculture and industry, Mr Hashemi-Rafsanjani said: Without electricity, roads, dams, and processing industries to service agriculture, it would be difficult to make use of the farmers' labor today. Agriculture's wheels could not turn without industry. You, the farmers, need to identify your soil type, fertilizer, pesticides, and other variable inputs of the agricultural sector. The government will gradually place all the necessary input at your disposal, and for this purpose we will fulfill our duty of serving you. Thus this country, as a whole, can become self-sufficient and independent in every respect. [passage omitted]

Ne'matzadeh on Investment Under 5-Year Plan

NC1501084090 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 0430 GMT 15 Jan 90

[Text] Industries Minister Ne'matzadeh, who visited to East Azarbayjan, stated in an interview with our correspondent that under the country's 5-year plan more than $4 billion is to be invested in industries and in the completion and operation of projects that are under way. Our colleague Vafa reports from Tabriz on this.

[Begin Vafa recording] In view of the significance of creating jobs and accelerating the rate of industrial growth, the general departments of industry can invest up to 1 billion rials in the provinces. Industries Minister Ne'matzadeh, who came to East Azarbayjan to inaugurate a number of production units and study the region's industrial needs, said that the policy of the Ministry of Industries in the 5-year plan for economic, social, and cultural development is based on investment in industries and in the completion and commissioning of projects currently under way. He added that credit of 150 billion rials has been earmarked for this purpose. He went on to say that more than $4 billion in foreign exchange will be invested in industry during the 5-year plan and that production units will be set up in various parts of the country according to the areas' needs. He said these projects include a pharmaceutical and serum manufacturing plant in East Azarbayjan and paper mills in Mazandaran and Khuzestan Provinces. He added that these plants will become operational during the period covered by the 5-year plan. It should be noted that several production and industrial units in East Azarbayjan became operational during the visit of our industries minister.

This is the Central News Unit correspondent in Tabriz. [end recording]

Drug Ring Uncovered in Markazi Province

LD1401190290 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1230 GMT 14 Jan 90

[Text] Four gangs engaged in the provision and distribution of narcotics in Markazi Province have been identified and arrested in the past two weeks by the guards from the narcotics squad of the Islamic Revolutionary Committee of that province. The deputy in charge of the intelligence and operations of the Islamic Revolutionary Committee of Markazi Province, having announced the above fact, said: In this connection, 25 smugglers were arrested, and 6.2 kilograms of opium, in addition to 1.7 million rials in cash, one minibus, and two vehicles were found in their possession and confiscated. He added: The members of this gang also confessed to having been involved in the purchase and sale of another 16.5 kilograms of opium. The deputy in charge of the intelligence and operations of the Islamic Revolutionary Committee also pointed out the arrest of 19 heroin distributors by the Islamic Revolutionary Guards of the township of Arak within the past 2 weeks.

Guards Arrest Drug Traffickers, Seize Narcotics

LD1501133190 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 15 Jan 90

[Text] Forty-six merchants of death have been arrested by Islamic Revolution Committee Guards and 172.8 kg of opium, 3.150 kg of heroin, 1.3 kg of hashish, and 32.5 grams of opium residue were seized.

The Central News Unit reports that Gonbad Islamic Revolution Committee Guards seized 60 kg of opium from a narcotics' smuggling gang. After obtaining new information from those arrested, they seized a further 112 kg of opium from their hideout and arrested 13 professional smugglers.

According to this report, in the continuing relentless and decisive fight against the merchants of death, two narcotics' smugglers were arrested in Zahedan and 24 kg of opium residue was seized from them.

Also, Kohkiluye and Boyerahmad Committee Guards seized 8.5 kg of opium residue which was hidden in a vehicle, and arrested three narcotics' smugglers.

Esfahan Committee Guards, too, arrested an Afghan smuggler and seized 1.5 kg of heroin, 1.3 kg hashish, and 800 grams of opium.

Maldives

Indian External Affairs Minister Begins Visit

BK1201155490 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 12 Jan 90

[Text] The external affairs minister, Mr I.K. Gujral, arrived in the Maldivian capital of Male on a 4-day visit to the country. He will participate in the first India-Maldivian joint commission talks to be held tomorrow.

Our special correspondent, S. Mathais, reports from Male that this is the first high-level contact between Maldives and India after the new government took over office in New Delhi. Our correspondent adds that Mr Gujral will also be having wide-ranging talks with his host on bilateral and international matters.

Earlier, speaking to newsmen in Trivandrum on his way to Male, Mr Gujral said India expects policy makers in Pakistan to ensure that extremist activities in Punjab and Jammu and Kashmir are not encouraged or supported from across the border in the interest of long-term peace and friendship.

Joint Commission Meeting Begins

BK1301091890 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0830 GMT 13 Jan 90

[Text] The first meeting of the Indo-Maldives joint commission began in Male, the capital of Maldives, today.

The two sides discussed at today's deliberations measures to strengthen the ongoing cooperation between the two countries and various projects taken up in Maldives with Indian assistance. Our special correspondent Mathais reports from Male that a memorandum of understanding on trade and extending INSAT [Indian Satellite] facilities for the meteorological and television purposes is expected to be signed during the 3-day meeting of the commission. The Indian side to the talks is led by the external affairs minister, Mr I.K. Gujral, while his counterpart, Mr Fathulla Jameel, leads his country's delegation.

Mr Gujral called on the Maldivian president, Mr Gayoom, today. Mr Gayoom agreed to visit India in the first half of March this year on New Delhi's invitation. The external affairs minister also apprised Mr Gayoom of India's initiative in the southeastern region [as heard] and the SAARC [South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation].

Mr Gujral also visited today sights of historical and tourist interest in and around Male. Notable among these is the ancient mosque which was restored with Indian assistance.

Memo on INSAT 1-D Signed

BK1501134090 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1230 GMT 15 Jan 90

[Text] India and Maldives have signed a memorandum of understanding allowing Male the use of Indian national satellite, INSAT 1-D, after its launch in July. It enables Maldives to receive meteorological data and Doordarshan [television] programs for rebroadcast on the local television network. The agreement was signed in Male today by the Indian high commissioner in Maldives, Mr M.P.M. Menon, and the Maldives permanent secretary in the Foreign Ministry, Mr Ibrahim Hussain Zaki.

The agreed minutes of the Indo-Maldives joint commission meeting were also signed by the external affairs minister, Mr I.K. Gujral, and his Maldivian counterpart, Mr Fathullah Jameel, incorporating the new measures to assist Maldives in various fields and steps to increase bilateral trade. The minutes relate to removing the visa restrictions, civil aviation, health and education, and restoring ancient monuments in the Maldives.

Pakistan

Mujahidin Government Leader Announces New Formula

BK1801025090 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu 0200 GMT 18 Jan 90

[Text] Professor 'Abdul Rab Rasul Sayyaf, the prime minister of the Afghan Interim Government, has announced a 16-point formula for a new Loya Jerga [Grand Assembly] and parliament in Afghanistan. Explaining main features of the formula in Peshawar yesterday, he said that they will set up four shuras [consultative bodies], which will comprise the Loya Jerga, the national assembly, provincial assemblies, and local shuras. He said that all Afghans belonging to any school of thought will be eligible to take part freely in these elections.

Islamabad Reports Denial of Training of Sikhs

BK1801042890 Islamabad Domestic Service in English 0300 GMT 18 Jan 90

[Text] The Pakistani high commission in New Delhi has described as totally baseless a PTI report from Washington claiming that Prime Minister Ms Benazir Bhutto charged the Punjab government headed by Mr Nawaz Sharif with arming and training Sikh extremists. The PTI report was attributed to an article by one Manish Thakur published in WALL STREET JOURNAL. The high commission pointed out that Ms Benazir Bhutto has neither met nor given any interview to the author of the article and no agency of Pakistan whatsoever is involved in any manner in the Indian Punjab problem.

The Pakistani high commission has also denied a report in a section of the Indian press claiming that the prime minister's special emissary, Mr Abdus Sattar, has said

that Indian allegations of Pakistan's involvement in Punjab and Kashmir should not be overlooked. It emphatically declared that Pakistan is no way involved in the situation in Punjab and Kashmir and the causes of the present turmoil are purely indigenous. Pakistan's position on the Kashmir issue is well known. It is committed to the solution of this issue through peaceful means in accordance with the UN resolutions and the Simla accord.

Envoy Tells UN of Kabul's Scud Missile Firing

BK1701153590 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu 1500 GMT 17 Jan 90

[Text] Pakistan has invited the attention of the United Nations to the Scud missile attack [as heard], which was recently fired by the Kabul regime into Pakistani territory. In a letter to the UN secretary general, Pakistani Ambassador Nasim Ahmad warned the Kabul regime to desist from such steps.

This letter was issued today as a document of the UN General Assembly and the Security Council.

Foreign Office Denies 'Massive' U.S. Aid Cut

BK1501092590 Islamabad THE MUSLIM in English 15 Jan 90 pp 1, 6

[Text] Islamabad, Jan. 14: Pakistan's Foreign Office here Sunday denied Press report suggesting a massive cut in United States economic assistance to Pakistan and said that the report published in a UAE [United Arab Emirates]-based paper was highly exaggerated.

He said, Pakistan has been assured that across the reduction in U.S. worldwide aid programme it would have very minor effect on Pakistan and it would in no case be slashed up to 160 million dollars as reported in the Press.

"It would be just a fraction of the figures mentioned in the Press" the spokesman said. He said that the issue, however, would be taken up during the forthcoming visit of Robert Kimmit, Under-Secretary of the U.S. State Department who is arriving here on Jan. 16.

Mr. Kimmit who is scheduled to visit Pakistan to have a reappraisal of the Afghanistan question will have two rounds of talks on Jan. 16 and 17. These talks will also cover some bilateral matters, the spokesman said and added that the U.S. official will also meet Mujahidin leaders during his stay in Pakistan.

Parliamentary Delegation Departs for Tehran

BK1701105390 Islamabad Overseas Service in English 0800 GMT 17 Jan 90

[Text] A 10-member parliamentary delegation led by the speaker of the National Assembly, Malik Mairaj Khalid, left Karachi for Tehran this morning on a week-long visit. Besides meeting their counterparts, it will also call on the Iranian president. It will also visit Mashhad and Esfahan.

Soviet Delegation Meets Senior Minister, Speaker

BK1601152990 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu 1500 GMT 16 Jan 90

[Text] The visiting Soviet youth delegation called on Senior Federal Minister Begum Nusrat Bhutto in Islamabad today. The delegation leader, Mr (Zedsev Zarev), appealed to Begum Nusrat Bhutto that joint efforts for the release of the Soviet prisoners of war be continued. He expressed gratitude for the commendable role played by the senior minister and Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto in connection with the release of some Soviet prisoners of war.

Begum Nusrat Bhutto assured the delegation that the government will extend all possible assistance for the release of prisoners of war. She apprised the delegation of various steps being taken by the government for the welfare of Pakistani youths.

The delegation also called on National Assembly Speaker Meraj Khalid. Talking to the delegation, the speaker hoped that such visits will provide opportunities for strengthening friendly relations between the peoples of the two countries.